A LETTER CONCERNING the preſent Troubles in ENGLAND:

VVritten from LONDON the 22. of *Ianuary* 1644. to a Miniſter of one of the Reformed Churches in FRANCE.

VVherein,

Is clearly ſet downe who are the Authours of them, and whereto the Innovations both in Church and State there do tend.

Faithfully Tranſlated out of the French.

OXFORD,
Printed by HENRY HALL Printer to the UNIVERSITIE. 1645.

A

LETTER

CONCERNING

the preſent Troubles in

ENGLAND:

To the Reader.

NO sooner did this Letter fall into my hands, but straight I had a thought to publish it; to the end that all the world might be acquainted with the deportment of that Faction in England, which for these thrie or foure yeares together hath caused the effusion of so much blood there. Some happily of our religion in France will at first glance disrelish my designe: but after they have throughly weighed it, I am confident they will all joyntly acknowledge their engagements to me for presenting them with a worke which undeceives their credulity, who strongly fancy that we countenance their irregular proceedings, and meet in the same thoughts with those that have beene the unhappy contrivers of them. And it may be also that some among the Catholiques will be ready to say this is but the opinion meerely of some one particular Person, and that all Protestants will not subscribe unto it. But I protest before God, that I never heard of any knowing judicious man with us, whose discourse agrees not with that of the Author here; and it were to be wished that the whole world would conforme it selfe to the example of the Reformed in France. Were it so, there should no Prince stand in need of guards, or be forced to levy Armies for the defence of his Person against the insolence and Rebellion of Subjects. There would be no more undermining the peace of the Church, which would now cherish a compleat union & absolute correspondency betwixt its owne and the secular government, confining it selfe to its proper limits, and having still a speciall regard to that subordination which is required of it. I speake this, Reader, because it is true; though sundry conceive otherwise of it, either meerely out of a custome they have embraced wholly to surrender themselves unto the sway of other mens judgement: or because they have a strong prejudice against the Discipline we practice, as if it were not altogether so agreeable with Monarchy. Iudge of it by the grounds thereof, and pause a while in comparing our actions with our doctrine (without resting upon any other con-

ſideration) and thou canſt not but conclude, that the ſole drift of our intentions hath ever beene to defend our ſelves rather by the weapons of the Spirit, then thoſe of the fleſh, and that we joine in an unanimous deteſtation of all ſuch as maintaine it lawfull to make uſe of temporall violence for promoting the truth of the Goſpell. This Letter I here preſent thee with, is caſt in the mould of the true Proteſtants. It appeares in defence of their doctrine touching the power of Kings, and the obedience of Subjects; withall condemning their proceedings, who under a pretence of purging the Church from its errours and enormities, and reinſtating Chriſtians in their loſt Liberty, maske a deſigne of engaging the whole world in a horrible confuſion. I cannot informe thee, who is the author of it. Thus much only thou maieſt know, that ſojourning in England, a certaine Miniſter, (a freind of his, and a man of great abilities) requeſted of him a large account in writing of the preſent diſtempers there. He hath done it, thou ſeeſt. He paints them in their proper colours, points out the contrivers of them, and their aimes. He makes it legible to the world, that this Parliament is nothing, in generality, but a ſeditious Crew, bending all their indeavours againſt the Lawes of the Realme, with a deſigne to turne all topſie-turvy; nor this Synod but (for the greateſt part alſo) an Aſſembly of Heretiques and Ignoramuſſes, that trample upon all the maximes of Chriſtianity, and entertaine no thoughts, but of an Epidemicall confuſion. That the People (in groſſe) are wholly ſet upon Anarchy, being coſened by a conſent wrought in them by the Parliament touching the Tyranny (as they phraſe it) of Kings; and intoxicated by the Synod with the hopes of a moſt bleſſed condition, were they but once freed from that inſupportable yoake of the Clergy. If happily out of this throng God hath ſequeſtred ſome well-affected perſons for himſelfe, they are ſo thinne a company, that they dare not declare themſelves, for feare of being overborne by the malice and number of the reſt, as divers have already beene. Weigh by this, Reader, if the malady be not great, the remedy difficult.

A LETTER CONCERNing the present troubles in *England*.

Sir,

WHEN I had the Honour to give you an account in writing of my abode here in *England*, I had not the least intention to acquaint you with all my thoughs touching the present distempers of the same. Not that the feare of any censure could amate me, although I am not ignorant, that he who would give a faithfull indifferent relation thereof, must oppose himselfe to those ordinary impressions, which men have already entertained concerning them. And if this amuse them (as no doubt but it will) that I cannot prevaile with my selfe to nousle them on in an errour, whereinto the malice or ignorance of their misinformers hath so deeply plunged them, I shall for a long time runne the hazard of their disfavour, as being resolved not to write any thing but of what I have beene an eye-witnesse, and which you will finde to beare no great harmony with the common voice. It is undoubtedly a matter of no triviall concernment to provide that the world be herein disabused, and that the truth of a businesse of this nature be no longer liable to misapprehension. Wherein you are somewhat interessed your selfe by that common profession you make in the list of such conscientious Persons as are designed to superintend the good of People, and to steere their Consciences aright. And I hope you (with many moe besides) will not be wanting to give the world satisfaction what a disparity you conceive betwixt the proceedings of

moſt of theſe Novell Reformers, and of thoſe who in former ages attempted to reſcue the Church from that Tyranny, under which for ſo long a time it groaned.

For my part I finde ſo little conformity in theſe latter to our firſt Reformers, that I thinke it concernes them to guild over with ſome ſpecious pretext the poiſon they diffuſe, as being their Enemies, not their Followers; or if perhaps they make a ſhew of treading the ſame path, 'tis not out of any intention to joine and aſſociate with them, but rather to marre and undoe the worke which by their meanes was ſet on foote in the world. And in truth, Sir, what can be hoped for from ſuch a Rabble as this (naturally ſo inſolent and headſtrong) but the markes of Rebellion both againſt God and Man? it being their ſole employment to advance factions and ſidings, when ever the affaires either of Religion or Policy are brought into agitation. So that if you abate hence all who have, either (out of haughtines and unbridledneſſe of Spirit) combined againſt their Prince, or nouriſhed the Schiſmes and ruptures of the Church in broaching their empty and wild Fancies, I dare not promiſe that the reſidue ſhall afford you either a Body of Subjects, or a Congregation of Chriſtians.

I intend not to diſcourſe of thoſe of the King's Party; wherein ('tis true) there be ſome apparently culpable, but yet more of ſuch as I may call really unfortunate, thoſe alone I meane, that make up the greateſt number of Reformed and Honeſt men in that Kingdome. I ſhall confine my Diſcourſe to thoſe, who beare the World in hand, they are at oddes with nothing but Popery, which in their jealous apprehenſions was taking roote in *England* againe. With this pretty cheate they have got the approbation of not a few Proteſtants, who (without ſifting their deſigne) are by this meanes engaged to applaude a parricidiall attempt upon the Soveraigne Majeſty, and a villainous plot againſt the Sacred *Overſeers* of the Church. Either of which two crimes is doubtleſſe one of the moſt eſſentiall notes of reprobation; nor is it poſſible for him to make good the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, who complies or holds any the leaſt correſpondence with ſuch as are knowingly guilty of the ſame.

Your new-fangled Miniſters of *London* are moſtly involved in the equall guilt of both. For who knowes not how at the very firſt riſe of theſe troubles they preached openly to the People, That *Kings*

are not to be obeyed if once they assault their Liberties and Priviledges (which in their construction is the first steppe to Tyranny) *or taking upon them to intermeddle in Church affaires, they fall upon any absurd & impious opinion.* Wherein they came nothing short of Cardinall *Bellarmine*, who writes, *That if Princes shall once apply themselves to the protection of Heresy or exercise of Tyranny, they are left to the mercy of the Pope, and the Church, who are first to excommunicate them, then to absolve the Subjects from the Oath of Allegiance, and they upon this discharge, assoone as they can be provided of a competent strength are to employ it against them, to expose them to punishment, and by all meanes feisible to dethrone them.* A wonderfull thing that they who are such professed enemies to the *Jesuites*, that use their persons (when they seize them) with so much inhumanity, and for the continued revolution of so many yeares have exposed their bodies quartered to all passengers (as a spectacle of horrour) upon their most eminent Gates, should notwithstanding shake hands with them in a point for the which at first they did so much abhorre them. Would you not conclude that they are all alike the Disciples of *Mariana*, and the Agents of a *Boniface?* what affinity is there betwixt these Doctours and Saint *Ambrose?* when this great Saint, this reall Christian perceived that the *Arians* were about to possesse themselves of the Church in *Milan*, with the approbation of the Emperour *Valentinian*, he addressed himselfe unto that Prince in these tearmes; *Royall Sir, we intreate, we presume not to fight. If the Prince will needs make use of his Supreame power, I am ready to discharge the duty of a Prelate. I shall stand upon my defence, but 'tis in the petitions of the poore. I can bemoane me, I can weepe, I can sigh; but against Armes, against Souldiers, against the Gothes, my onely weapons are teares, nor ought I to use any other manner of resistance whatsoever.* And in another place, *If the Kingdome shall lye panting under the pressures of Tyranny, I am ready to suffer any kind of violence, even Death it selfe.* Besides that universall injunction laid upon Christians, *to put up injuries with patience, (God having reserved unto himselfe the right of revenging by the power of his Justice,* as Saint *Gregory* upon *Job* speakes, *Man being uncapable of performing it, but with a heart fraught with malice*) he knew I say besides this what *David* once sung to God; *against thee onely have I sinned*: upon which passage (in the Apology he compiled for him) he thus comments;

ments; *He was a King, and so not within the reach of the Lawes: Vinculis delictorum liberi sunt reges*; if I may borrow the attestation of so divine a pen. Now if *David* were not mistaken, if Saint *Ambrose* spake reason in this point, with Saint *Chrysostome*, who assures us so punctually, that *Kings are above the Lawes*; What shall we thinke of our upstart *Reformers*, that have placed Kings below their People, and stirre up the People against their Kings? It is a pregnant evidence they are swayed by that spirit of rebellion, which heretofore animated the *Gregories*, the *Bonifaces*, the *Mariana's*, the *Bellarmines*, to attempt upon the Honour and life of Kings, rather then by that spirit of wisedome and meekenesse, which moved *Solomon* to leave this divine precept behind him, (equally obliging all that have not forfeited their reason) never to divorce the respect due unto Kings from that which they owe unto God himselfe; and in case they shall presume to do otherwise, associating themselves with such Libertines as refuse to pay the tribute of obedience, to be afraid their calamity doe not arise suddainly. The Pulpits here are full of none but Preachers of discord and division betwixt the King and his Subjects. In lieu of praises, magnifying the name of God, Invocation of the Holy Spirit, Confession of Sinnes, sighs and groanes for the commission thereof, here is nothing to be heard but reproaches, revilings and accusations. Charity in all other places throwes her skirt over the Errours she discovers, be they as great and numerous as can be: 'Tis charity here to lay them naked in the view of the world, and if there be no reall ones, to devise some, that so they may never be destitute of a forgery wherewith to traduce their Prince. His Person and Actions are both exposed to publique reproaches: The Churches Ring of nothing but declamations against Him; and if happily some small relickes of shame have ever slacked the heate of those bawling *Predicants*, or railing *Scriblers*, impudence makes others in compensation to double the Cry. This yet is nothing in comparison of their usuall Execrations, as if that Law pronounced by the mouth of God himselfe, which forbids *to curse the Prince of his People, no not so much as in thought*, did not at all concerne them. That detestable *League* which in the memory of our Fathers was attended with such tragique effects in three or foure of our Kings raignes, and against which our Protestants have alwaies so eagerly declaimed, laying their grounds upon certaine proofes drawne from

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the corruption of *Rome*, which gave life unto it, had nothing in it of more venimous consequence, then this we see here, save that the Emissaries and Boute-feus of the English Confederacy have not as yet imbrued their hands in the bloud of their King.

And can it suite with their profession, who talke so much of reducing Christian Religion to it's primitive purity, and reviving the Innocence and Simplicity of the Apostolique times, who call him their Master that reconciled the world to God, and united men in the same mutuall affections, who are not ignorant that Peace and Concord are the essentiall characters of a Christian, and that such should never be the occasioners of warre, to employ the sword in such a manner as this?

I cannot thinke there's any man so credulous as to beleive, that such courses can finde any welcome among those that are Protestants indeed; they may with many who are such in shew onely, of which sort are all the opposers, not of monarchy alone, but indefinitely of any secular authority whatsoever. There were some in the infancy of the Church, who strained Christian liberty so farre, that they condemned it as unjust for the *Enfranchised* of God, and such as were guided by his spirit, to be subject to the command of any creature.

The *Donatists* sucked the same poison from them, which afterwards diffused it selfe among the *Anabaptists*; and in fine reached us also, by meanes of some who gave a second birth to this Heresy, which now walkes up and downe here in great bravery, under pretences very specious in the apprehension of some shallow judgements. And though I conceive this will not be to the generall prejudice of the Reformed Churches in *Europe* (by reason of that just jealousy which Princes ought to entertaine, that they hold no intelligence amongst themselves, and that they doe not all bandy together against the rights and prerogatives of their respective dominions.) Yet it must needs be to their shame at least, if they doe not openly declare against the villany of their proceedings, and the iniquity of their designes; especially since they have had the impudence to invite them to an imitation of their example, and to steppe in for the support of their faction. I am not ignorant what grounds we goe upon, and how little resemblance ours beare to theirs; but the world will not passe sentence upon us by our positions, but either by our actions, or by our si-

lence. For if we be silent when they are bragging of conformity with us, and yet appearing in the field against their Soveraigne, who will not be ready to conclude that had we the like power in our hands, we would do as much every whit our selves? but if on the contrary we speake our mindes, condemning the unlawfullnesse and horridnesse of their designe, (our actions suiting still with our doctrine) in stead of exasperating the secular powers, we shall gaine them: for it cannot be but they will take part with us, and shake off such as make them so subordinate either to the people in grosse, or to some select parcell of the whole body, who (let them talke what they will) are no lesse Subjects then the rest. In breife, I need but demand whether of the two are the better Christians; those that wast so much bloud to subvert the right of Kings, and to cherish a warre (under counterfeit pretences) for the suppression of all order, and engaging the whole world to the same common confusion? Or they of the Primitive times, who maintained, *that to shed bloud was to violate Christianity; to oppose Kings, was to disobey God, and to contest with Superiours, was to fight against that Order, which he established.* I beleeve they will hardly be swayed by examples, lesse by reason; nor that they put any great value upon the authority, which the practise of the first ages may challenge over us. If they do, I would exhort such preachers of fire and sword, to call to minde how the ancient discipline of the Church denied their communion *to such as had slaine an Enemy in a lawfull warre*, and that they would hence collect how those times stood affected to such as voluntarily embroyled themselves in an unlawfull and unjust one.

See, Sir, in part what I have to say to you upon this argument. It will not be amisse, if in the next place I acquaint you with the innovations they make in Religion, and what fruits Christianity is like to reape from the labours of such doughty Reformers. 'Tis a truly impious designe to persue a Reformation in such manner as these men do, and which tends onely to the subversion of an order established by God, under a pretence of pulling downe one devised by man, which they call *Tyranny*, because indeed it is the onely meanes whereby to check them in that full carcere of unbridled licentiousnesse, unto which they are naturally so much devoted. Not but that there is alwayes matter enough for a reformation both in manners and government, and that it is extreamely necessary to correct the

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evills and disorders of the present times, and withall to prevent that corruption which may be feared from the future. But who will be the fittest to go through with this taske? will the Parliament? no, in as much as the *Bishops*, that is the Clergy are no longer a part of it. Will the *Synod* be able to supply this defect? no, not they, because the whole body is composed of persons interessed; besides that ignorance and blindenesse are there (for the most part) in their greatest exaltation: or if perhaps there be some knowing, there is a great dearth of honest men, most of them being possest with the spirit of division, which hath drawne them into the by-paths of Hereticks, as well ancient, as moderne. Well then, shall the People beare the burthen? this is altogether impossible, unlesse first there be made an universall resignation of all sence and reason, because (of themselves) they are uncapable of all manner of order and conduct. Neither can the King, assisted only by his Counsell and Magistrates, be thought a fit instrument to mannage the businesse, for feare he make Religion waite upon his owne private interest, and by consequent bring the spirit under the command of the Flesh. The issue then will be to finde out a just and lawfull way for the advancing of this Reformation; which in my opinion can be no other then that of a generall *Assembly*, indicted by the Prince; wherein the *Boroughs* shall have their Deputies, whose voices are to be heard, and their suffrages admitted; The Church it's Bishops and Doctors; The Parliament diverse of the Nobility, which they may chuse out of their severall Houses; and the King his principall Officers. And to make the action more Authentique to establish in the Church that uniformity, which ought to be in a body in which the Spirit of Union and Concord is the Moderatour (as that of Christiansis) there may be called thither the most eminent Protestants from forraigne parts, by whose assistance all doubts and scruples may be solved. This in my judgement is the way, to maintaine the severall rights of each order in the State of *England*, as also in the whole body of Christendome, entire. I know none that can dislike the project, but your new *Independants*, and the fanatique *Illuminatees*, commonly called *Brownists*, who in truth are no other but the Brats or Brethren of the *Munster-Faction*. These men have fancied to themselves a monstrous Common-wealth, an absurd and motley State, in which there should not be the least cognizance

of civill Authority, nor any other ſpirituall power acknowledged, but ſuch as the Sonne of God ſhould by an inſenſible and hidden influence exerciſe over them. Collect now from theſe Premiſes, how ſuch kinde of people ſtand affected to Royalty, and then what reckoning they make of Councels, and the Perſons they conſiſt of. Their aime indeed is to ruine both; to have no Rulers or Overſeers at all, either Temporall or Spirituall, Secular or Eccleſiaſticall. They want no ſpecious colours to blanch the blackneſſe of their Deſigne. They make their King a Demy-Apoſtate, and little better then a Tyrant: They proclaime to the world, that he *had a reſolution to violate Religion, and to deſtroy their Liberties and Priviledges. That he hath ſupplanted the Fundamentall Lawes of the Realme, and falſified the Oath made to his Subjects, the obſervation of which alone muſt entitle him to a Dominion over them.* As for the Overſeers of the Church, *it hath no need* (ſay they) *of any at all, in as much as the Founder and Head thereof hath skill enough to governe, as he had to eſtabliſh it. That 'tis enough if there be meere Paſtours only to preach, without being lifted above others, or others above them.* Such be the Authors and Abettours of this Fancie who gave the firſt blow at *Epiſcopacy*. A ſtrange thing that ſome even of the honeſter ſort, ſhould ſo raſhly mingle with the enemies of that Order, tranſported in the ſimplicity of their hearts by this groundleſſe conceit, that 'tis the Prelates alone who have opened the gap to wickedneſſe in the Church, as if where there are no Biſhops at all, Innocence and purity bare an abſolute and ſoveraigne command in the Soules of men. *Ferrier, Potet*, with many more beſides in *France* will be perpetuall atteſtours to the world, that your Church Government lyes no leſſe open to the aſſaults and ſtratagems of the Devill, then that which hath beene ſetled from all Antiquity. Were it my drift to ſearch it to the bottome, it would be eaſie to demonſtrate this with advantage, and that had it beene a few yeares elder, and liv'd in a Country where the Lawes of the Prince are not ſo rigorous againſt Innovatours, as they be in *France* (which permits but two ſorts of Religion) or at leaſt if God had not from time to time raiſed ſome eminently guifted Perſons therein, (in which reſpect I muſt needs confidently affirme, that it flouriſheth now more then ever) there could not have wanted matter, through the many viſible inconveniences thereof, to embroyle the Church in a tedious and perpetuall

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taske. I shall but point at one; 'tis the equality of Pastours, which indeed at first blush presents you with a comely glosse, and hath a wonderfull influence upon the fancy, when it beholds it at a distance, but (in truth) is the source of disorder, the fountaine of negligence, and the bane of that laudable emulation among the virtuous to out-strip one another in goodnesse. It is to shut the doore against the perfection of life, in denying the strictest observers of their masters injunctions those advantages and prerogatives which himselfe hath designed them. What a block is it in the way to all those eminent persons without, who were a-coming toward us? You know better then I how memorable to this purpose is the example of *the Arch-bishop of Spalata?* Being to be honoured with no ranke at all above others, can you thinke they will quit that which they enjoy where they are? There can be no humility so great but may justly take offence at this. How can any Genius, acquainted thoroughly with it selfe, and borne to a preheminence over others with some singular endowments of Nature, be allured over to a profession, whose sweetest baite is but a voice with the meanest, and where its resolutions shall be valued as cheape as those of any other particular Person? The world is not to learne what a traine of inconveniencies attend these kind of suffrages and Deliberations, and how there must needes follow many farre worse upon the neck of those, so long as there is nothing but a bare supputation of Votes, without any endowed with Power and Abilities to poyse them. Put case their Assemblies consist of a hundred Persons; will there in truth be found ten, who will not rather be opinionate to cover their severall defects, then be conformable to the example of their fellowes, or endeavour to better themselves by their Counsells? Such is that selfe-love and radicall inclination we have to sooth our selves, that we do not easily hearken to the commands of reason, till we be awed thereunto. And seeing this distinction of degrees is so necessary for the good of the Church, how shall that end be obtained, if there be not some delegated both in and out of those Assemblies, to represent the power of the whole, to exact upon all emergencies an account of their proceedings, to have the right of propoling, and collecting Votes, of ratifying Decrees, of promulgating and putting them in execution, and daring to the field whatsoever opposers of the same? Is this feisible without a Bishop, see-

ing that in such Synods as ours all enjoy an equality of Power and Authority, and where (according to that proverbiall censure of the Assemblies of *Carthage.*) *The greater number carries it from the better?* Besides, when the Synod is dissolved, each Minister is left to his owne liberty, to do what his fancy shall suggest unto him. Put case he be found hipping either in manners or Doctrine, he is accountable to none but those of his owne Consistory, who are allwaies in readinesse, like so many rotten Pillars, to support a crazie Wall; or so many blinde guides, that will needes undertake to reduce straglers into the way, or such as leade men upon a præcipice. So that by this meanes the offender wants no invitations nor advantages to inveigle those that lend an eare to him, he being no way accountable but to another Assembly. In the interim he is proling for parties to his crimes, and Abettours to his Opinions; so that instead of fearing the rigour of a Judge in the Synod, he is often provided of an Advocate, which would be altogether impossible, were there one enabled to stifle such disorders in the wombe. This hints me of what I have read in *Calvin* upon this Argument. That *the Presbyters*, to wit, all such as had the cure of Soules, *were accustomed in every City to cull out one amongst the rest, upon whom in particular they bestowed the title of Bishop, to prevent* (saith he) *those ordinary Divisions, which flow from a Parity. Notwithstanding this Bishop was not so farre lifted up above his fellowes in honour and degree, as that he might exercise any act of jurisdiction over them. His proper function resembled that of a Consul in the Senate. He made relation of proceedings in a full House, he advised, informed, exhorted: He ruled all by his authority, mannaged the whole Action, and put the generall and unanimous results of the Senate in execution*, whereto he subjoyneth, *that according to the universall attestation of all Antiquity, the necessity of the times was the first Authoriser of this Custome.* Now this necessity was nothing but those divisions which crept in among the Pastours of the Church for want of some principall Overseers, which is now farre greater in this Nation, then ever it was with them, as you shall see anon.

But let us feele a little more the pulses of these men that will have no degrees or preheminence in the Church. They be the very same that would have none in the State also. They strike at Episcopacy for the same ends they have assaulted Royalty. They are

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no ſtrangers to the frowardneſſe of their owne diſpoſitions, but are ſufficiently convicted how farre each of them in particular hath degenerated from the *Maximes*, and even from the very graine of their Anceſtours. That they are generally odious and deſtructive to the Publike, nor can ever build any hopes to themſelves but ſuch as muſt have their foundation in perpetuall diſcords. That ſeeing their expectations fruſtrate, and themſelves conſequently in a wretched condition, their onely way is to advance a generall confuſion, and ſo to involve all order and conſtitution of former ages (which croſſe their wicked inclinations) in the ſame common ruine. The very complexion of theſe *Rake-hells* ſpeakes the worth of what they oppoſe ſo eagerly. To which if you adde the manner how they have from the beginning invaded it, with what violence they have proceeded, you may eaſily inferre the baſeneſſe of thoſe who put them upon that employment. No ſooner had they notice of thoſe jealouſies betwixt the King and his Parliament (wherein at that time there were not a few ſicke of the ſame diſeaſe with themſelves) but they readily embraced the opportunity, to make their Soveraigne and the Biſhops ſenſible of their inveterate ſpleene towards them. Having firſt ſet ſome of the other ſexe a worke, (which in the open ſtreets renounced all ſhame and modeſty, in lieu of benedictions (wherewith the cuſtome was to greet Princes) to belch out with a deliberate impudence moſt traiterous expreſſions againſt their King: the impunity of that ſexe (whoſe inſolence is oftner ſleighted, then puniſhed) animated the other to a deſperate reſolution of offering violence unto his Perſon. To which purpoſe they inveſt his Pallace, ſeize upon *White hall* gates, and had not the well mannaged providence of ſome of the *Lords* (though ſtrongly ſuſpected by that frantique multitude) quaſhed their deſigne, he could not have eſcaped their hands. The King having given them the ſlip, immediately they divert the ſtreame of their fury upon the *Biſhops*, & as if they had beene of a *Jewiſh* deſcent, and ſome *Pilates* were upon the bench to give judgement, they cryed, away with thoſe followers of Chriſt, as the other had cryed, away with Chriſt himſelfe. The Parliament indeavouring in a Prudent way to ſettle this diſorder, found a rub at the firſt from ſome among themſelves that had a maine hand in the buſineſſe, giving private intelligence to that ſeditious Rabble, how their proceedings were diſliked, and how the Houſe of Lords had

carried

carried the matter in favour of the Bishops; and that they likewise were seconded by a considerable party of the House of Commons. This set them all on fire in a moment; insomuch that of Accusers and Prosecuters they had turned Executioners, if those pious men had not by keeping out of the way given place to their fury. In the meane time they are still urgent, they bawle, they threaten. But perceiving how that great Body would hardly be forced without destroying it, and throwing themselves also into danger, they joine subtilty to open violence. The Bishops must be impeached of High Treason against King and Kingdome, and of subverting the Fundamentall Lawes of the Land. This prodigious calumny nourished the boldnesse of their Abettours in Parliament, and drew over to them all the faint-hearted, debarred the liberty of protecting Justice, and rendring her venerable to such as had yet freely withstood those violent courses. From that very houre they are interdicted all resort to Parliament. Their Houses are plundered, their persons imprisoned, their complaints derided. In a word, there is not any outrage imaginable which they did not exercise upon them; insomuch that the very reasons they alleadged to cleare themselves, were brought under the compasse of a high misdemeanour, albeit they knew not how to proceed against them; For even in their greatest heate they were forced to leave the matter undecided, and so it continues to this day. They are nevermore gravelled, then when they fall upon debate of that. The Parliament, that is to say, the *Lower House*, and the *Synod*, doe both joine heads together to put an end to the Question. The one, in debarring those a place in their Assembly, who have a right to sit there from the first institution of Parliaments, and whose votes in that place are so fundamentally necessary, that without them all the decrees of the other are null, and the originall constitution of the Kingdome infringed thereby. The other, contributes to their totall extirpation, and to shake off all obedience to them, that so they may open a gappe to their Libertinisme, and force upon the Church that disorder and confusion which the spirit of giddinesse, they are possessed with, hath ever aimed at.

I judge, Sir, by these proceedings what sincerity there is in these *Novelists*, and if any honest man can shake hands with them. I suppose the Bishops had indeed transgressed in matter of State, this is but a poore plea for the proscription of Episcopacy it selfe.

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The Persons should be punished, not the Profession abolished; after the example of those Emperours, who having upon good grounds (such at least as appeared so to them) ejected certaine of their Bishops, did forthwith substitute others in their roomes, to let the world know, that if with one hand they put the law in execution against the crimes of men, with the tother they would still maintaine the reverence due unto an Order in their esteeme so sacred, that those they had divested of it, they adjudged altogether unworthy of the same. Suppose now they were found peccant in point of Religion; this they may be as Men, and as Sinners, not as Bishops.

The Ministery among us was never arraigned for those strange crimes, which have beene proved upon some of it's Professours. The Church is here to employ her authority, which stretcheth not beyond suspension or deprivation, and that of the Persons, not of the Function. How many Bishops hath Antiquity beheld shamelesly profaneing the holinesse of their Profession? How many tainted with avarice, ambition, tyranny, heresie, sorcery? and yet never man saw any considerable number of them condemned; never durst or would any pretetre a Bill for the suppression of the Order.

I am not ignorant of what is here commonly objected, that absolute authority and superfluity of riches are the usuall bane of the Soule; and that there be but few men of ranke, upon whom they have not a corruptive influence. That these two, being as it were inseperable Accidents, cannot be sequestred from the Church without destroying the Subject which containes them. That the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* concurred in the same judgement, and that of late they have received a totall proscription among our selves.

For the first, it is granted by all, that Riches and Authority suite not indeed with a narrow soule, uncapable either of rightly understanding, or knowingly valuing the pure and true dictates of Christianity.

To the second, who denies but there may be Bishops without either investing them with an absolute Power, or affording them any such excesse of riches?

In the whole Primitive Church there were none but indigent and necessitous ones, enabled with no other authority, then to dispense the graces of God, and to proclaime his Judgements unto the Peo-

ple. And yet no doubt but if choice were made of conscientious men after the example of the Primitive Fathers, there would be little ground to grudge them what the bounty of Kings and the consent of the People hath suffered them for so many ages successively to enjoy.

If they be such as are indeed worthy of a Bishopricke, they will employ their authority in executing Justice upon the vicious, expend their riches in accommodating the needy, as the Prelates here doe generally at this day. Their very Adversaries confesse them to have ever beene most strict inquisitours after crimes, and most severe punishers of the same. Nor can they deny, that the poore and unfortunate, the Widowes and Orphans have ever found somewhat either in their Counsell or credit to protect them from scorne and reproach. And they must needs farther acknowledge, that besides those workes of Charity, (which call for a reverent esteeme, and even a kind of veneration to the memory of an infinite traine of Bishops) the publicke monuments founded by them both for the Honour and the profit of that Kingdome, are so many pregnant arguments, that they have employed their great revenues, rather as just Srewards for the benefit of others, then as the vassals of their owne pleasures. Witnesse so many stately Churches, famous Colledges, rich Hospitals, so many Bridges, Foundations, Dotations, Edifices, which owe their being to that Order.

'Tis true; the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses* were generally against Bishops: but who can give us the true meaning of those we desire may passe for our patternes? How many were there amongst them whom it would be a great crime to propose for our imitation? I cannot be induced to beleive, that they of the most rationall sort among them, who were best acquainted with the Errours which had then stole into the Church, were the same with those who at that time made warre upon the Bishops. Nor can I thinke, that they who massacred *Trincavell*, their Viscount in *Besiers*, and dasht out their Prelates teeth, (having taken Sanctuary in Saint *Magdalen's* Church) were in the number of those whose successours we glory to be called. If so, what may we thinke of the Divine Providence which forty two yeares after gave these bloud-thirsty men into the hands of the *Croisades* (as very bloud-suckers as themselves) who sacrificed them in the selfe same Church, wherein they had spilled the

bloud

bloud of others. Vengeance pursued them into the place they had choſen for a Sanctuary, and where they had exerciſed their cruelty, there they received their puniſhment. A remarkeable circumſtance to aſſure us that the finger of God's Juſtice was there. In the Hiſtory of the *Kings*, the Bookes of *Chronicles* and *Maccabees*, there are ſundry notable examples of God's particular indignation againſt ſome, upon whom he executed Juſtice in the ſame places where they had committed their ſeverall crimes. The like you have in *Joſephus*, and generally every Author abounds with ſuch examples; all which I will baulke with ſilence, that I may not paſſe over two or three remarkeable accidents to this purpoſe, in ſuch freſh memory and knowledge of all the People here, that even at this day they ſtrike the conſciences of the moſt with aſtoniſhment, however they ſtill continue in defiance to ſuch viſible ſummons from that providence which endeavours by this meanes to awake them.

The death of *Hampden* is one. This man whom all your *Noveliſts* looked upon as one of the cheiſe Actours in the managing of their deſigne, and who was the firſt that put them in a poſture of Armes againſt their Prince, received his Deaths-wound in the very ſame * feild where firſt he put the *Militia* in execution. That of the Lord *Brookes* is another, and perhaps you will thinke it a greater miracle. In the very moment he threatned to demoliſh the Cathedrall of *Lichfield*, the ſame day whereon they celebrated the memory of the * Saint that founded it, he was ſlaine with the glance of a bullet ſent him from the hands of a dumbe perſon, and that too juſt as he was peeping out at a door; which I think hath not been hitherto obſerved. Theſe circumſtances are not to paſſe our attention, being ſo many infallible teſtimonies of a Divine vengeance. I might adde to the liſt of ſuch examples that horrible diſeaſe of *Pym*. At the ſame time that his Conſcience was gnawed with the vermine of ambition; affecting a Tyrannicke power, God gave him for food to live, and made him periſh by ſuch a kind of death, as once he did thoſe monſtrous Tyrants, *Herod* and *Philip* the ſecond, who both imbrued their hands in the bloud of their owne ſonnes.

Chalgrove field.

Saint Chad.

It remaines now, that I ſhould anſwer to ſuch objections as are drawne from the cuſtome of *France*, wherein you can ſpare me a labour your ſelfe with many moe beſides, that are acquainted with

the present inconveniences which attend that way, and forelee such as may be feared for the future.

In the meane time I will proceed to examine the grounds of Episcopacy. And first of all I say that Episcopacy is either of Divine, or at least of Ecclesiasticall Institution. If of the former, then ought Bishops to be continued where they are, and restored where they are not. Put case it be of the latter onely, we are to examine whether it was establish'd upon good grounds, or no; and if so, whether those grounds be not of equall validity with us, and we obliged as much thereupon to maintaine it. I intend not at this time to discusse either of these two questions: that taske hath a ready beene so amply performed by sundry eminent writers of this age, that there remaines little more to be done to it. Nor will I deliver my owne opinion, I shall onely insist upon two others. Saint *Hierome* saith that Episcopacy was instituted as the onely meanes to stoppe the current of those Divisions which sprung at first among Christians. *Before* (saith he) *that by the instigation of the Devill there were any sidings in Religion, and People began to say, I am of* Paul, *and I of* Cephas, *and I of* Apollos, *the Churches were ruled by the joint resolutions of Presbyters. But when every one began to fancy, that those he baptized were his owne, and not Christ's, it was ordained throughout the whole world, that there should be one chosen out of the rest with whom the care of the Church was to be entrusted for the rooting up of Schismes, and taking away all matter of dissention.* What this great Doctor spake so punctually of the Baptisme of *Paul*, of *Cephas*, and *Apollos*, is nothing (in my judgement) but an allusion to what we reade in one of the Epistles to the *Corinthians*, and ought to be construed of all those seeds of division which the Devill scattered among Christians in the infancy of the Church, and such as he hath throwne amongst them ever since. Thus we see so many monstrous Heresies have beene strangled by meanes of this Order; some assoone as they saw the light; others, after they had in a sort empoisoned the whole Earth. And if still there have continued some in the World, or any slips of the old roote have beene remaining, it hath generally happened in such places where Episcopacy had not it's full force, and where Councells have not enjoyed their due liberty, as in some of the Southerne and Easterne Countries, and some also of the North, where Christian Religion hath suffered either a totall extirpation,

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or at least some notable alteration by *Mahumetanisme*.

If then Episcopacy hath produced fruits answerable to their hopes who did first institute it (as beyond all contradiction it hath) to what course shall we betake our selves in these distractive times, wherein the Devill is so busy at his old game, in fomenting Divisions among all those whom the Spirit of God hath freed from the yoke and slavery of *Rome*? now especially when there are so many visible Factions amongst us, some siding with *Luther*, others with *Calvin*, and most of the rest following no other guides, then their owne apish unruly Fancies? what course I say shall we now fly to for remedy, but the example of all antiquity, in tracing their Steps, and conforming to their rules; withall applying our selves to those Antidotes wherewith they healed the like distempers we suffer, and are upon the point to perish under? In those times the unity of the Head begat an Unity of Mission, this an Unity of Doctrine, and both together an Unity of all the Faithfull among themselves. But in these dayes of ours, from the multitude of Pastours equall in authority, there flowes a diversity of Mission, from this a repugnancy of Doctrines, and from both jointly the Schismes and sidings of People; which could never have befallen us, had men contented themselves with a meere Reformation of Episcopacy, and not utterly abolished it; Or if during their Division, they had established it, in such places as they had made themselves Masters of, or where they enjoyed a Toleration. This is cleare from the example of *Rome*, whose Disciples are never at oddes with themselves, but still keepe the Body close and well compacted in all it's Members, through the skill of their Conductours, who have the sole power of deciding controversies amongst them, and they neither have authority, nor any the least badge thereof, but what they derive from their Heads. So that it is a rare thing to behold any Innovation of Religion with them, either in Doctrine or Discipline, and if any should arise, that Order doth so hedge it in, that it cannot proceed a steppe further, then they please themselves.

If examples borrowed from our Enemies be odious, let us insist onely upon that of *England*. So long as the Bishops were not molested in their Function, that Kingdome was not disquieted with any Schismes or disorders in the Church. There durst not a Sectarie shew his head, till those Christian Guides were overborne with violence,

and all superiority among Pastours decryed. Now if their conjecture be found; who say that Saint *Hierome* builds not a bare allusion upon the words of Saint *Paul*, but a cleare observation, that immediately after the Apostles times there arose certaine jarres among their Disciples, some pretending to a right of greater preheminence by reason of some better endowments (which every one in particular ascribed to him who had baptised and instructed him) and that upon this foundation the Devill attempted to build a multiplicity of bodies, and prevailed so farre, that he seemed to have got a share in the Church then in her Infancy; have not we reason every moment to feare the like now from so many upstart Doctrines in Religion, and so many different sects in *Europe*, resulting from that variety of Opinions which is every where to be seene amongst our Teachers? The malady is so great, that it seemes to be arrived at its height, and so little care is taken of applying a remedy, as if men had a designe palpably to betray the cause of God. The greatest mischiefe I finde herein is, that so long as our exteriour government shall continue in the same posture it is at this present, it will be impossible to heale the distemper, and if we go about to alter the Order established, it must needes be from better to worse, in as much as every sect will be busy in tempting others after it, and so make a rupture in the Body, and teare the Church in peeces.

Let us once more reflect a little upon Antiquity. Had there beene ought amisse in the first institution of Episcopacy, and had not indeed the Spirit of God beene the sole contriver of it for the common benefit of the Church, could his providence have given way to that generall unanimous approbation it received from Christians in every corner of the Universe? We see clearely, that of all the new Lawes and severall alterations devised by the wisedome and prudence of man, there is not any one but hath beene opposed in some part of the world, or other. Witnesse what ere hath beene obtruded upon the Church either against the custome of Antiquity or the rules of Scripture, such as are *the Supreme authority of one Person in cases spirituall, the severall tenets about the Eucharist, Invocation of Saints, worshiping of Images*, with many other. But this decree which enables one of those that are imployed in the dispensation of the Heavenly treasures with a power above his fellowes hath continued inviolable among all the Nations of the earth for well-

well-nigh the ſpace of fourteene hundred yeares together, not a man in all this time opening his mouth againſt it, (what ever difference of opinions, Schiſmes and Hereſies the Spirit of blindeneſſe introduced within the pale of Chriſtianity) till this age of our Reformers, who perſwaded themſelves they could by humane prudence ſetle among the Miniſters of the Goſpell an equality of merit, of zeale, of charity and affection, by ordaining an equality of Power and Authority, and were further confident by this meanes to cut the throate of that Tyranny, under which our Fathers for ſo long a time had groaned, as alſo to re-invite into the world that ſweetneſſe and affability, wherewith the founders of the Church ſo expreſſely charged it ſhould be governed. And laſtly they preſumed, that if the Prelates were once outed, integrity, innocence, and good manners would be reſtored to their place in the Church againe, nor ſhould luxury, incontinence, or any other kinde of leudneſſe uſurpe their Roomes any more for ever.

These indeed were good wiſhes and deſires, but the meanes of perſuing them ſtarke naught. Neither did they meet with a generall likeing, divers having rejected them as fighting with that ſucceſſe which others had promiſed themſelves in the uſe of them. Did not *Germany*, which firſt threw the Pope out of the Saddle, and where the purity of the Goſpell was firſt reſtored to its antient Liberty, retaine ſtill in her Churches that ſuperiority, againſt which they declaime here? 'Tis inviolably maintained in moſt countries of the North. Did the Patriarch of *Conſtantinople* abjure or condemne it, *Cyrill.* when he reformed himſelfe after the example of the Proteſtants in the Weſt? Or dare any of us deny him our Communion, becauſe he retained it? Nay was he ever ſo much as adviſed to forgoe it? The luſtre and majeſty of the title he bare was no impediment to him from being both a confeſſour and a martyr of the ſame Chriſt we worſhip.

But let us herein conſult with our moſt eminent Reformers. *Luther* a moſt violent oppoſer of the Authors of ruine and corruption in the Church, after he hath ſpent himſelfe in heaping reproaches upon the Biſhops, calling them *Idolls, and dumb Statues, idle puppets, deceitfull maskes, trunkes without branches or rootes, empty ſhadowes, ſtage-players, ſuch as were ſo farre from knowing the honour of their Function, and how to diſcharge it aright, that they did not underſtand*

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the Etimology of the name they bare; wolfes; breifly: traytours, tyrants, murtherers, the monsters of the Universe, the burden of the earth, the Apostles of Antichrist, moulded and fitted for the destruction of the world, and extinguishing the light of the Gospell, at last he comes to himselfe againe, and tells *us that he inveighs onely against the corruption of their lives, and their palpable Ignorance; as for the rest, that he harboured not a thought against the Order and frame of the Church, and that nothing he had spoken of those idle drousie Animalls and filthy belly-Gods ought to be applyed to the honest Pastours, and reall Bishops,* whom he there calls *the Heads and Over-seers of the Christian Church.* In other places, as namely in *his Captivity of Babylon,* he overthrowes the sacrament of Order, and rejecteth (as a groundlesse fancy) their indelible character. But he quarrells not there with Bishops alone, but even with *Preists* and *Deacons,* avouching all *the faithfull equally to be Preists and Deacons,* and endowed with equall Authority. Notwithstanding recollecting himselfe, he concludes for *the excellency of Episcopacy, acknowledging the name thereof to be sacred and ancient: and that if he deny it those against whom he declaimes, 'tis because he thinks it unlawfull to bestow it on such, whose corruption and filthinesse renders them so unworthy of it.* In the Tract he compiled *for the instruction of Ministers,* he closeth his *reformation with an establishment of Bishops, to which he would have the Cities of Bohemia conforme themselves: in electing one or two, and enabling them with Authority over the rest, to goe in visitation about the Churches after the example of Saint* Peter *in the Acts,* which he stileth *a lawfull and Evangelicall Archiepiscopacy.* But if men be so vainely timerous that they dare not adventure upon the reestablishing of an *Apostolicall Institution,* he permits them to retaine the custome of *Rome, in having Bishops to call, ordaine, and confirme such as they shall finde capable according to the platforme and Doctrine of* Saint *Paul.* So likewise you may see divers examples of that age, which testify that the opinions of those times were much different from ours about the point in Question. We finde in one of *Peter Martyrs* Epistles to *Beza,* that a certaine Bishop of *Troy* making a scruple of continuing in that profession after his conversion to the Reformation, was unanimously received and acknowledged of all for a lawfull Prelate, whose Authority together with his Piety prov'd a maine advancement of the Churches good. This worthy Author

not condemning Episcopacy in generall, passeth only this verdict upon it, that in as much as none are raised to that dignity but by the favour of Princes, Christians can have but faint hopes of reaping any great benefit thereby. In the same place he concludes *for the necessity of their visitations, as a present remedy to cure the naturall infirmity of man, who is ever declining from bad to worse, and he speakes there of Primates and Arch-bishops*, as of those, who for Sanctity of life and Purity of Doctrine were designed to this Function in the severall Cities and Sees of greatest note: withall condemning those who intrude at their owne pleasures into the Ministery, & concludeing it is not without some emphaticall ground, *that in the Epistles to* Timothy *and* Titus *the severall conditions and qualifications of Bishops, Preists, and Deacons are so punctually described.* Where it is worth your observation, that he marshalls all three in their proper ranks, a pregnant evidence that he made more then two degrees of Ecclesiasticall Order. And so likewise doth the Author of our reformed discipline in *France*, who in the first Article acquaints us with three sorts of *Ministers*, *Bishops* or *Pastours*, *Deacons*, and *Presbyters*, quoting to this purpose the same Epistles with *Peter Martyr*. Where two things deserve our notice, first the name of *Bishops*, and next that of *Presbyters*. As for the former I cannot but wonder why he should confound it with that of *Pastours*, & then after distinguish both from *Presbyters*, if it be true (as many would have it) that *Presbyters*, *Pastours*, and *Bishops*, were but one and the selfe same thing in the Primitive Church. As for the name of *Presbyters*, it is misapplyed with us to such whose Function speakes them to be no more then *Deacons*. A thing utterly repugnant to the practice all ages. Whence it appeares, that he was somewhat ashamed to baulke an Order which he knew the Primitive and purer Christians held in such singular estimation, and the Church, maugre the severall corruptions in it, hath ever since maintained. At least we may shrewdly suspect, that he afforded this name a place there, as the print or shadow (at least) of a Function which had beene before, and the seed or basis of that which ought to have beene established among the Churches in his time; then especially when it might be done with the least prejudice to manners or doctrine, both which it was constantly beleeved were most of all undermined by *Episcopacy*. The truth is, all the Divines of greatest note with us have beene

driven upon this conclusion, whensoever they have fallen upon the same Question. They all joyntly condemned with extreamest rigour the corruptions, which in their times were (in a sort) the individuall companions of that Profession, but they never deny it its due reverence, considered abstractively in it selfe. *Calvin* after he himselfe had executed the Office of a Bishop in *Geneva*, * discourseing of the ancient institution of *Bishops* in Cities, of *Arch-Bishops* above them in Provinces, and in fine of *Patriarchs* advanced at the Councell of *Nice* above both the former, saith, *that this was done in order to the discipline of the Church, and* withall acknowledgeth, *that Antiquity notwithstanding such innovations, had not the least thought of obtruding upon the Church any other forme of government, then what God himselfe had prescribed in his word. That howsoever they bestowed on that forme of their owne the name of Hierarchy, a word not extant in Scripture, yet we are not to dwell upon the notion, but to weigh the nature of the thing in selfe.* By which passage, Sir, you may easily inferre, how this worthy Author stood affected to the Order we speake of. That of *Beza* an able judicious writer (if we reflect upon the times he liv'd in) is no lesse for our purpose, then the former. He grants in one place, that *Episcopacy was usefull in the Church*, and that *the distinction of Bishops and Arch-bishops was first instituted for the readier conveening of Synods, and managing the affaires of the Church with more steadinesse.* To wave what this able Auth or hath farther delivered upon the Question, who will not hence conclude (if he cast but an eye upon the many difficulties they meet with that are to steere the inclinations of men either in Religion or Policy) that he was so farre from disallowing *Episcopacy*, that on the contrary he approv'd it as an Institution of highest consequence to Christianity? And in the particular case of *England*, every body knowes, that these two eminent Persons absolutely subscribed to its continuance there. The one of which hath published so much to the world in a Tract against *Saravia*: and doth not the other also speake expressely in behalfe of those in that Kingdome, which the men of this generation would quite extirpate?

* *Instit. l. 4. c. 4. § 4.*

But let us farther examine their opinion who speake of the thing in generall, *Polanus* is peremptory, that *to make up those breaches in the Church which happened after the Apostles times, there was one set over the rest of the Presbyters, and call'd by way of eminence Bishop,*

whereto

whereto he subjoyneth, *that in relation to that primitive order and discipline of the Church, there hath ever beene one ranked before the rest of his Brethren to keepe them within compasse, and to prevent the broaching of any new doctrines.* Melanchtan is yet more expresse: *The policy of the Church* (saith he) *that is the exteriour face thereof, is compounded of two ingredients. The first is the Ministery, a thing of Gods owne immediate institution, (and it containes five parts, 1. The right of calling and ordaining Ministers. 2. The injunction to preach the Gospell. 3. The power of remitting sinnes. 4. of administring the Sacraments, and 5. The right of exercising Jurisdiction upon Offenders by excommunication.) The second is the humane Constitutions of Bishops, and Councells, who are to regulate the degrees of Ministers, and the difference of time and place when and where to execute their Functions. Now* (saith he) *those constitutions are to be maintained for the cherishing of good Order, yet so as they be drained from all tincture of superstition,* And he gives the reason, *because they have a kinde of right naturall, the very law of nature obligeing us to the constant observation of good order in the conduct of our lives.* A passage very pat for *Episcopacy*, as noting unto us the impossibility of composing any Church-disorders without it. For the Members will then teare one another in peices, and the body which kept them together in so close and strict an union, *cannot long maintaine the peace and harmony which that order as the soule infused into them*, as Saint *Basil* somewhere speaketh. I cannot wave neither a passage I have sometimes read in *Hierome Savanarola*, a bitter enemy to the corruption of the Clergy, and one that vehemently declaim'd against the disorders of the Church. *If* (saith he in his booke *de veritate Fidei*) *there shall happen any knotty difficult scruple in the Assemblies of the faithfull, the Bishops are they that must decide the Question*: which must needes be construed of that superiority, whereby they are to bridle the boldnesse and insolence of such as being hurried on with a spirit of confusion, disquiet the Church with maladies hard to be cured. This mov'd the other *Hierome* about 1200 yeares agoe to avouch, that the *prosperity of the Church did so mainely depend upon the superiour Minister, that were it otherwise, there would be as many Schismes among Christians, as Presbyters. Which consequent* (saith the *Arch-bishop of Spalata*) *is manifestly seene in such of the reformed Churches as have abandoned Episcopacy.* This

Was the reason why the Princes and all those of the Clergy that subscribed to the *Ausburge Confession*, did joine in such an open Protestation before God and Man, that they sought not for the extirpation of it. They were as well acquainted as we with the corruption of the Bishops, and had as much (at least) to feare from their continuance, as we can possibly have. And yet to prevent the unavoidable necessity of that confusion, into which they would otherwise have fallen, they unanimously agreed upon the defence of that Ancient Order, and to oppose with all eagerness such as should endeavour the abolition of the same. This they hotly pursued, not barely in order to Religion which they laboured to rescue from Romish slavery, but also for some secular considerations, intwisted with Religion it selfe; as the union and concord of the People, without which it would be a very hard taske for them to preserve their severall Rights and Prerogatives entire. This also is the reason why the succeeding Emperours made so many attempts to bereave the German Protestants of this Order, being taught by experience that Episcopacy keepes them closer together, and that this union of the People is the greatest obstacle to their ambitious designs. Had there been any Bishops in the *Palatinate*, all the rest of the reformed parts in *Germany* would have strucke in for their defence, and engaged themselves in the same quarrell. *France* it selfe would not have suffered them to be made such an easy prey to the house of *Austria*. But all things seemed to conspire the ruine of that State, which to the prejudice of it's owne particular interests, the interests of Christendome, and of all those of the North (who had declared themselves both against *Rome*, and against all such as aim'd at an universall Monarchy) would needs set on foot new maximes, and pursue the project of a reformation, from which it had so many visible evills to feare.

I have long since exceeded the bounds of a Letter, and (contrary to my first thoughts) have well-nigh swelled it into a Volume. The feare I have to trespasse upon your patience makes me passe by a whole cloud of our first Reformers, all jointly subscribing to the same conclusion. And besides, the small remnant of time behind will not suffer me to recall into your memory what those of our Age determine upon the Question.

I have scarce heard of any able and judicious Divine with us, who values not this Ancient Order as the band and instrument of that peace

peace which Christ preached. I know very well that all your *narrow* and popular Judgements doe leane another way, and that the number of these exceeds by much that of the more knowing sort. Nor am I ignorant, that there be some able malicious heads amongst us, which clearely see the truth, but cannot affect it; they are so transported with the love of an unlawfull and counterfeite liberty, that they never busy themselves about the prevention of that disorder which it will inevitably (sooner or later) pull upon them and all such as adhere to them.

Mounsieur *du Moulin* is none of that number. This gallant man (whom God honoured with so many eminent gifts above all that were either the Authors or Abettours of such corruptions as had crept into the Church) is peremptory in the point (appealing to the generall suffrage of Ecclesiasticall story) that *immediately after the times of the Apostles, or indeed while they were yet living, there begun in every City to be one of the Pastours set over the rest, distinguished by the Title of Bishop, and invested with a power above his fellowes, to prevent that confusion which ordinarily flowes from equality, & this institution met with a generall approbation; whence* (saith He) *we cannot excuse* Aërius *for opposing the determination of the Church in his time, when the difference stood onely in point of Discipline.* A little after he concludes, that *in* England *God made use of certaine Bishops out of the Church of* Rome *for accomplishing that glorious worke of the Reformation; whereupon the name and dignity Episcopall hath beene derived successively unto such his Ministers, whom he hath raised up to discover the errours and corruption of men. That in other places where God made choice of Presbyters and Doctours, the Pastours of the Church are barely stiled Ministers, the People with us being not able to digest the names of Preists and Bishops, the bad conversation of such as went under that name having rendred them so extreamely odious.* Which yet is but a slender ground for their extirpation, as I shall cleare anon.

Antonius de Dominis, an able man without question, and a professed adversary to the Romish Tyranny (under which in fine he perished) maintaines with great force of reason, that *the Election of Ministers, to wit, of Bishops and Preists, was made by the Apostles according to the institution of Christ; that the Church hath alwaies acknowledged and professed a difference betwixt them; the diversity of*

their functions and the generall practice of antiquity having ever ranked Bishops before Presbyters.

And in the same place he takes the paines to collect and salve the severall passages of Scripture which seemingly speake the contrary, as also those in the Fathers, and Canons of Councels. Whereupon he gives us a very remarkeable observation (which I gave you a light touch of before) and 'tis this, That *all such as forsooke the Communion of the Catholicke Church (as the Novatians and Donatists) would yet still retaine their Bishops, knowing very well that the Church could not possibly subsist without them, as being absolutely necessary in the Catholique Church, of which every one in particular would pretend to be a Member.*

And hence is it that in *Rome* there have sometimes beene three at once; one of the *Catholiques*, who was the lawfull and true one; the other two, of those two bodies (or rather dismembred peeces of the Church) which they set up for no other reason, but because they would otherwise have beene convicted to be without the pale of the Church of Christ.

I hope Monsieur *Blondell* and *Salmasius*, when they have once purged Episcopacy from such corruptions as the spirit of lying had fastened upon it (on purpose to render it as pernicious in the use, as it was sacred in the institution) will no longer keepe aloofe in their opinions from us, but sadly laying to heart the evills which will inevitably oppresse the whole Church, if once it be deprived of it's ancient forme of goverment, they will contribute such advice to this miserable Country, as their knowledge and honesty shall suggest unto them: nor continue to stifle a knowne truth, as many at this day (strangers to neither of us) so unconscionably doe. Let the *Monkes* grumble (as long as they please) against that Order, to which they cannot endure their owne extravagant rules should be any way subordinate. Let the insolent and saucy *Jesuite* oppose their authority, and slinke out of their sight for feare they should take notice of his Corruption. But let us whose thoughts ought to be most pure, and actions most regular, submit unto those maximes to which these fifteen last Centuries have paid an universall obedience. Who knowes not that if the Power delegated to the Ministers of the Gospell should be equally shared amongst all, Confusion and Division must needs be the issue? Had not the *Jewes* (who were but an inconside-

rable

rable Body in respect of us Christians) their *High Preist*, answerable to our Bishop in every particular Church? who marched before the rest, enjoyed divers peculiar prerogatives above his Brethren, and had certaine distinct functions in point of Religion apperteining to him. Doth not even reason informe us, that 'tis impossible for any Congregation or Society of men to keepe long together, if there be not some one set over the rest, that (like an indissoluble chaine) is to restraine the severall members (how different and disagreeing soever among themselves) within the limits of their proper callings. What would be the issue of all our Assemblyes, had they not a president over them? by meanes whereof we still retaine an *Idea* of that Churches practise, which we have abandoned for it's impurities. And this indeed is the onely Antidote for all sores and distempers in the Church; no remedy so present and Soveraigne; it being impossible for the same man to differ from himselfe. We see that Families are ever at unity when they beare an orderly subjection to the Master of the House, be there never so many private jarrings of opinions among the severall members.

Examine we the matter yet a little further. Is there any thing more agreeable to reason, then that the lesse depend upon the greater, the weake and feeble upon the strong? in a word, to behold that subordination in the world, that where any prejudiciall counsels or resolutions shall happen to be proposed, they may be timously check'd by some intervening authority, and kept within the bounds prescribed them.

How many may we every day see attempting to passe the bounds of their abilities and professions? and of what a banefull consequence the impunity of such irregularities may prove, I leave it for any man to determine. This I'me sure made the Divine Providence speake by the mouth of Saint *Paul*, that * *when the Prophets speake, there should be some to judge.* That which followes is very observable; * *The spirits of the Prophets are subject unto the Prophets*; whereof presently he renders the reason; For * *God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace, as in all Churches of the Saints.*

* 1 Cor. 14.29.
* v 33.
* v. 34.

Behold, Sir, at a nearer distance the reasons for which this Order was first established, which in my judgement are of equall force for the continuance of it to all ages; seeing you have as great cause now as ever to feare those inconveniences which attend an equality.

You

You have Counceels to be assembled, Schismes to be composed, Heretiques to be convinced, and many ill appointed Churches to be visited.

But there is yet a more speciall and pressing motive in the case of *England*, to wit, the Genius of the People, who being accustomed to gaze upon a gorgeous outside, will not without much reluctancy be drawne to yeild any manner of reverence and submission to such as stand not upon the vantage-ground of honour. Witnesse their Divines and all the *gowned tribe*. Let their vertues be never so legible, the Great ones looke upon them but as so many *silly fellowes in blacke*, extracted out of the scumme of the People, who for their part thinke they doe them a great honour, if they shall vouchsafe to use them as their companions. The case being thus, what may we thinke would attend the extirpation of Episcopacy out of that Kingdome, but the utter contempt of Christianity?

From vilifying the persons, 'tis ordinary to proceed next to a slighting of the Profession, though never so sacred. And if they put such a cheape esteeme upon the Persons of those that are to direct the Conscience, and watch over the soule, with what oscitancy and indevotion will all their counsels and instructions be entertained amongst them? 'Tis indeed the dignity of the Prelates which hath hitherto supported the dignity of Religion, and if any manner of respect hath beene paid them, it was first excited by the Majesty and lustre of that superiority wherewith God hath invested them, as the most naturall meanes to keepe in an Evangelicall awe a People, whose very Genius seconded with excesse of riches and security, hath merited them the name of *the most insolent People in the world*.

But they tell us, that the Bishops of meere Overseers were become absolute Lords; and of Rulers had transformed themselves into Tyrants: which indeed may be true of some, but not of all. How many have there beene in *England* since the Reformation so farre from the least smacke of their Predecessours or any of their fellow brethrens vanity, that on the contrary in examples of modesty and and humility they have left most of the truly Reformed Pastours in *Europe* behind them? who knowes not that the now Bishop of *Durham*, notwithstanding the large revenues he formerly enjoyed, and the severall titles of honour particularly annexed to that Bishop-

ricke,

ricke, hath manifested to the world that he is cast in the same mould with those untainted soules of the Primitive Church.

All men may reade his temper, and what spirit swayed him in his greatest prosperity, inasmuch as now sharing in the common calamity, depriv'd of all his livelyhood, and brought to indigence, thrown downe from so high a pitch of greatnesse to so low an ebbe, from so much honour to so much infamy, shut up as it were in a prison, without ease, without liberty, and almost without a freind too, aged about fourescore and five or six yeares; he beares it all out with such composednesse of spirit, such an absolute resignation of himselfe to the Divine Providence in the midst of these his trialls, that he seemes to have no part in the corruption of the Times, and those impurities wherewith they charge his Brethren: such a large portion he hath in the innocence and vertues of the Primitive Martyrs.

Did ever any man behold a more Apostolique man, then the present * *Primate of Ireland?* I applaud not now the learning either of the one, or other. I speake onely of their piety, that characteristicall vertue of the Saints.

* Bishop Usher.

Could any the most active and noted adversaries of Episcopacy ever blemish the conversation of Doctor *Bromhall* Bishop of *Derry*, of *Jewell*, *Bilson*, *Hall*, *Downham*, *Davenant*, *Sands*, *Abbot*, *Andrewes*, *Usher*, *Prideaux*, and a large Catalogue besides of such whose vertues are not yet come to my knowledge, no more then their names? For all those prerogatives they enjoy above other men by reason of the Character they beare, for all that superiority and those titles full of pompe and magnificence the Lawes of the Land have allowed them; did ever any know them give the least scandall to the most scrupulous conscience, or the least occasion for the meanest Subject to complaine of them? On the contrary, the whole course of their lives is a copy worthy the imitation not onely of such as had need to reforme themselves, but even of the most unblameable persons. I should but wrong their modesties in proceeding any further. And I would be loath to distast them, having no other intent then simply to describe them. However I shall confidently avouch thus much, that they live in Episcopacy with much more integrity, then any of their Persecutours do in their professions; as being conformable to their intention who first gave life

unto it. The Divine Authours of so sacred an Ordinance knew well enough what high conceits are apt to surprize the soules of men when once they are lifted up above others: and hence was it that of so many names wherewith the Apostles invested the Rulers of the Church, they pitch't upon the name of *Bishop*, for such as were to sit at the Sterne. There were others that carried more state and lustre with them, as that of *Pastour*, wherewith *Homer* honours his King, of *Elder*, of *Doctour*, of *President*, of *Cheife*. But this is a name of toile and diligence, by which the first imposers of it intended to containe such as they had exalted above the ranke of others within the bounds of their calling. And agreeable hereunto, what paines have the men we named ever denied to consecrate unto the Church? Have they ever thwarted the Rules of their first Institution? And if the name they beare speakes them engaged to a perpetuall taske in managing of publicke affaires, have they not ever applied all the powers of their soules to the pursuance of the same? Yes, they have done it with a flaming and saint-like zeale, and have made the world read in their Actions their constant readinesse to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to the good of their Brethren.

But they are traduced for countenancing Popery where it was already, and scattering some new seeds thereof where it had been extirpate.

This may be true of some, but is a grosse slander upon the most of them.

If it had a simple toleration, this was done mostly out of a charitable regard towards the Reformed Churches in Popish Dominions; nay further for the good of the Papists themselves whom they so tolerated. Their examples, their conversation, their affable deportment might happily one day draw them over to a Profession from which banishments and other the like rigorous courses doe commonly divert them. Religion cannot be forced upon the soule. God must either infuse it himselfe, or perswade it by men. Had the Bishops leaned never so little to the Popish Party, and could they have been induced by any warping in opinion to favour those of that Religion when the Protestants were overborne in *Ireland*, they would certainly have used them with more humanity when they had them at their mercy; as an argument of that good correspondence betwixt them.

But

But the caſe was much otherwiſe, ſo as never were any in a more deplorable condition, then they. There is no manner of reproach, diſgrace, loſſe & perſecution, which hath not befallen them. Had the Biſhops there beene ſuch as the common voice proclaimes them, would they not have beene ſpared? And if they had not been Proteſtants indeed, would they not have gone over to the Conquerours, and have followed the prevailing party? was there for all this, I will not ſay a Biſhop, but even any well affected to Epiſcopacy, whom the threats of Fire and Sword could prevaile with to embrace Popery, and renounce the Reformed Religion?

They further tell us, that they doated too much upon titles of pride and ambition, and ſuch honours as the ſuperſtition and Idolatry of blinder times beſtowed on them. Beſhrew their hearts that did ſo. But the Innocent have reaſon to complaine of hard dealing, if they muſt be liſted with the guilty, were there indeed any ſuch at all. You will pardon me if I ſhall hereupon avouch, that many even of our owne men have ſometimes picked a quarrell where there needed none. I remember we once fell in diſcourſe upon this argument, and how after ſome ſlight debate you agreed with me in the upſhot, that the Overſeers of the Church ought in all reaſon to be inveſted with ſome diſtinct and peculiar character to draw reſpect from inferiours; That this was ever the practice of the Church, and the very intention of thoſe that eſtabliſhed a ſuperiority therein. Whence aroſe the ſeverall appellations of *Father*, *Paternity*, *Pope*, *Holineſſe*, with many ſuch in uſe with antiquity. Nor is *Epiſcopacy* and the *reſpects* due unto it commended unto us with more earneſtneſſe, then formerly they were. As God ſeemes to have graven his image in a more eminent manner upon the face of ſuch as are in authority, thereby repreſenting his unity, (an unity not to be parallell'd with any thing in the world) in like ſort hath the Church univerſall honoured them with ſuch prerogatives as might beſt denote the obedience due to God himſelfe who conferred that function upon them. Hence doth the Author of that Epiſtle to the *Trallians*, which goes under the name of Saint *Ignatius*, uſe theſe expreſſe tearmes; *Reverence your Biſhop as yee doe Chriſt, reſerving alſo a ſhare in the honour to the Presbyters, that ſo by your ſubjection to the Biſhop and the Presbytery, ye may be ſanctified in all things.* This Presbytery, as he there interprets it himſelfe, is the *Colledge of Presbyters, a ſacred Aſſembly, the Bi-*

ſhops Councellors, and ſuch as we call Aſſeſſours in civill Courts, to whom he enjoynes obedience *as to the Apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt.* Where the diſtinction he makes betwixt the honour due to Biſhops and that appertaining to Presbyters is worth our obſervation. For he ſaith that the former are to be reverenc'd as *Chriſt*, the other as his Apoſtles; which he would never have done had he not preſumed that they, who were intruſted with the care of the Church, did governe it according to the rules of their Maſter, ſurrendring themſelves to the obedience of his holy ſpirit, and theſe holding faſt to their head, won authority to their Miniſtery and all their inſtructions by that conformity betwixt them.

I am not Ignorant that ſome cavill at this exhortation, and take occaſion hereby to condemne that age of having firſt attempted upon the honour and reſpect due unto Chriſt; as if by ſuch expreſſions the Biſhops were put into the ballance with him; but theſe men conſider not how all this was grounded upon Scripture; *He that heareth you heareth me; They have not rejected you but mee; Obey them that have the rule over you.* And beſides, what *Ignatius* enjoines in behalfe of *Biſhops*, *Polycarpus* a diſciple of the Apoſtles expreſſely recommendeth in behalfe of *Preiſts* and *Deacons*, in that excellent Epiſtle he wrote to the *Philippians*; which we have only ſeene in manuſcript. *Abſtaining* (ſaith he) *from theſe things, be ye ſubject to the Preiſts and to the Deacons, as unto God and Chriſt:* the like expreſſion was uſed by the Primitive Doctours of the Church in exhorting the People to obey their Kings and Princes, which they borrowed from an Epiſtle fathered upon *Barnabas*, not * yet publiſhed to the world. What inconvenience can there be in beſtowing that upon one which hath beene given to many, and allowing as much to a Biſhop, as hath beene granted an Aſſembly of Presbyters, ſeeing that (in the language of antiquity) *the care of the Church which was diſperſed in the whole body, is united in him, and that authority which had beene ſcattered amongſt ſo many, wholly devolved upon him?* Suppoſe this corruption in manners they talke of were ſuch indeed, or worſe; ſuppoſe farther, that the Biſhops were guilty of ſome errours in Doctrine; may we for all this ſuppreſſe them? nothing leſſe, nay we are not ſo much as to decline theirs or any mans company upon this ground alone, if we will beleeve one of our moſt able and judicious writers; *Cameron* I meane, who in his *Lectures*,

* *This Epiſtle of* Barnabas *was firſt printed at* Oxford *by the Lord Primate of* Ireland; *and ſince at* Paris.

Of

Of the Church, hath this passage, *that we ought not to deny a diseased Person the benefit of our society, if the malady be not mortall and contagious. That in the body the seperation of any one part is dangerous, what errour soever hath infected it, except it be Heresie or Superstition, otherwise there can be no just cause of doing so.* As for the depravation of manners he is yet more expresse, affirmeing it *downeright folly for any man to conceive that a sufficient ground of seperation, and* alleadging the words of Christ, *they sit in Moses chaire, what therefore they bid you, that doe*; and he gives the reason, *wheresoever there is purity of Doctrine, God must needs have a Church, though encombred with a multitude of faults.* Now if this eminent writer had occasion to speake thus, what a grosse shame is it for such as have nothing to object against their Bishops, but the bare corruption of manners, to endeavour not only a simple seperation from them, but a totall suppression of them? As for their Doctrine, that's Scot-free from censure; 'tis indeed so pure, that it agrees in every particular with that of our best reformed Divines; witnesse their severall Tracts of the *Eucharist*, *The power of the Pope*, *The right of Kings*, *The adoration of Images*, and the like; which assure us, that those which at this day advance the purity of Religion, are their deserving successors that laboured so much in the first establishing of it. Such were the Prelates God employed in this great worke, the Arch-bishops of *Canterbury*, & *Yorke*, the Bishops of *London*, *Worcester*, in *Peter Martyrs* time, *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, men all famous in their generations, and such as knew how to weild a Bishoprick. Most of which dyed martyrs in that hot Combat they maintained against the Errours and impieties of their times. Before them (when men durst scarce mutter of a Reformation) one of the Bishops of *Linzolne* courageously entred the Lists with the Idolatry and Superstition into which the Church was then plunged. And he performed the Combate with so much gallantry, that the common suffrage of all good men after him gave him this honorary title, *The Hammer of Rome*. Yet for all this they of *London* make him and the rest I have named you the common theame of their Invectives, both in the Presse, and in the Pulpit. They spare not to call them in publique *a packe of impostours, and Hypocrites, such as never trac'd the paths of Christianity, but in a reeling posture, their soules being drunke with the cup of abomination.* what fellowship can *Grosthead.*

we have with such a generation as this? We, who have ever paid so much honour and esteeme to the memory of those worthy men, that we have placed them in the ranke and calendar of our Martyrs? Nay our most upright and conscientious Divines have proposed each circumstance of their lives and deaths, as the most exquisite patternes in all *Europe* (and perhaps in the whole world besides) of an unwearied constancy in asserting Truth and suppressing falshood.

Finally, they are accused for intermedling too much in State affaires. They will needs have it unlawfull for them to beare any share in the administration of Justice, and that such priviledges should be annexed to Episcopacy, which (say they) are incompatible with any but the Secular Authority, and therefore they tooke care to devest them of the same in the beginning of this Parliament. They which harpe so much upon this string are the very same malignant Spirits of which I have formerly given you the character. Had they but any shadow of reason, is it possible they should thus fight against the custome and example of so many ages both in their owne & forraigne Countries? Who knowes not that the Constitutions of greatest consequence in any State have bin made in Councells & Assemblies of Bishops? What else meaneth that ancient Ordinance (of almost 900 yeares standing) which pronounceth all *Elections of Kings void, where the Bishops and cheife of the People are denyed their Votes?* And whence arose the custome, in all debates of preserving inheritances & successions in families of having as much recourse to Episcopall as Regall Authority in that behalfe? We finde that King *Æthelstane Ann.* 928. by expresse Statute joyned the Bishops in Commission with the Justices Secular, to stop the current of Injustice, and to root out all the seedes thereof. Those employments did not divert them from the care of the Church Councels were no whit the rarer.

On the contrary, we finde that in this Age (or a little before) when the barbarisme of the *Saxons* had almost spent it self and men begun to tast the sweetnesse of Christianity, that the Bishops (thereupon resuming their Authority, and following the advice of one *Boniface*, Arch-bishop of *Mayence*) ordained, that every Presbyter should yearly give an account of his Ministery to the Bishop, who likewise for his part was yearly to visit his Diocesse, & in like manner to yeild an account of his proceedings to the Metropolitan; these and many o-

ther

ther Ordinances (tending all to the eſtabliſhment of purity in manners) were with all rigour put in execution, notwithſtanding they ſet a part ſome time for ſecular affaires. And this is further very remarkeable, that Biſhops themſelves made lawes for the government of the People; We finde it amongſt others in one *Odon* Arch-biſhop of *Canterbury*, who exhorteth the Prince to yeeld all manner of obedience and ſubmiſſion to the Biſhops, which ſpeakes the antiquity of their Power in this Kingdome: a power which I can ſee no cauſe ſhould be denied them, if thoſe that are inveſted with it be ſincere Profeſſors of true Chriſtianity (as they ought to be who are preferred to Biſhopricks) no more then their right of ſitting in Parliaments, a right common to them with all the Biſhops that ever have beene in the world, and to which thoſe of this Kingdome have a ſtronger title, it being but the ſmall remnant of that great power they had once, and which they mannaged with ſo much diſcretion. Nor was it ever knowne that either King or People endeavoured their extirpation heretofore, no not ſo much as to exerciſe any rigour upon their perſons, for about eleven hundred yeares together, ſince the tyranny of the *Saxon* Kings forced them to quit the Realm and retire themſelves to *France*, that they might enjoy more eaſe and liberty of Conſcience in the ſervice of God.

If ever their Votes in Parliament were lyable to ſuſpicion, it was doubtleſſe in the reigne of *Henry the* 8, when they had ſo ſtraight a dependance upon *Rome*; that Prince having in a manner ſhaken off the Romiſh yoake, and by his owne ſole authority taken upon him the government of the Church of England (which Pope *Nicholas* had heretofore freely reſigned to *Edward the Confeſſour*) had juſt cauſe to feare that in thoſe Conventions they would betray his intereſts for of the *Holy See*'s ſake, (as they call it) and ſo by conſequent that he runne a great hazard of his owne Prerogative in not excluding them. Notwithſtanding he never had ſuch a thought. No more had *Edward* the Sixth, nor Queene *Elizabeth*; and certainly thoſe Princes had more to feare for the Rights of their Crowne, (which they reſcued from the Romiſh Subjection) then the People at this day can poſſibly have for their liberties and Priviledges. Their Religion then bound them to what (in all probability) was very prejudiciall to the Rights of their King; nothing doth now oblige them to the leaſt diſadvantage of the People.

Then

Then they swore obedience to the Bishop of *Rome*; now they do it to none but to God himselfe. Then the discipline of the Church had well-nigh suffered a totall subversion, and *England* (after the example of *Poland*) might have conceived that the Nobility alone, without Bishops, were intrusted with the Reformation of the Church, and that there was no more need of Prelates for Counsellors of State, that is, to sit in Parliament. Notwithstanding neither did that Example nor these considerations prove prejudiciall to the Bishops: The Fundamentall law of the Realme, by which they are established, together with the necessity of maintaining them, and besides that sundry the most eminent amongst them had couragiously sacrificed their lives in behalfe of Christianity, outpoysed all other considerations whatsoever. And the law which first seated them in Parliament, expects them there still; now especially, when God is pleased to make use of Publicke votes for the government of the Church, they are of more importance then ever. They are in *England*, as in our Assemblies of State, or as the Clergy in our highest Courts of Justice. Which of our Kings, (who are absolute Monarchs, without sharing their Power, either with People or Parliaments (as they do in other places) which of them I say, did ever entertaine a thought of debarring the Bishops this Priviledge? We finde indeed in a certaine old Constitution, that one of our Kings out of a zealous and pious intent, making (it seemes) a conscience of diverting them from the service of God, discharged them all, except the Abbat of Saint *Denys*, from assisting at Parliaments, and hearing criminall cases; but we finde not that this Ordinance was ever put in execution: but on the contrary that the weightiest employments of those times were wholly devolved upon *Churchmen*, whose abilities and honesty won them such a generall repute, that the custome then was for Princes to select, among others, two Bishops for the cheife of their retinue, to be the *Comptrolers of the Court*, and withall to see that justice were exactly and duely administred. They had likewise two Masters *of Requests* continually attending on them, one of which was alwayes a Clergy-man, who gave *present Justice*. And we finde in a certaine Constitution of one of our *Philips*, that of five appointed to give answer to such Petitions as were presented in Parliaments, two were to be Lay-men, and three Clerkes.

But

But what neede we go farther then *England* to warrant the equity of this custome? debarre the Bishops their right of sitting in Parliament, and what respect will a proud licentious People afford the Clergy? you may assure your selfe none at all. Let them use what meanes they can to make them, their Synods, or Councells, of any esteeme with them, they will conforme no further to them then they please themselves. Indeed to divote Bishops in such Assemblies, is to bereave them of all Authority, and to open a gap for any wilde Chrochets in point of Religion to enter in that Kingdome. 'Tis in a word, to suppresse the Bishops themselves, to throw downe the Pillars of the Church, and so to render the conservation of Christian Purity impossible.

Perhaps Sir, you may thinke I speake in this more then comes to my share, being one who professe to have no portion in the corruptions of *Rome*, and so much to abhorre the Superstition of embracing such things as some upon divers pretences, (either out of ignorance or malice) have introduced into the world, to the great prejudice and disquiet thereof, and in derogation to the just liberty of Conscience. But if you please to reflect a little upon that prodigious clashing of opinions, which at this day divides *England* into so many severall sects, you will certainely conclude with me, that in case this Order be once abolished, neither innocence of manners, nor integrity of doctrine, can any longer enjoy a place in that Church. The reason is obvious, if it be but considered how, since the discontinuing of Episcopall Power in that Kingdome, those that owe obedience and should be accountable for their doctrines to the Bishops, do now live in such a horrible fashion (as I have allready inform'd you) that we may safely beleeve the most of them are the spawne of such as were once disgorged out of the mouth of Hell, and dispersed in the Church to stifle Christianity in her Cradle, rather then the successors of those that have beene the constant assertors of truth and oppossers of falshood. Witnesse the severall impieties and heresies both ancient and moderne, wherewith they empoyson the soules of that People, who (in the common confusion) listen to them, blindely swallowing downe (under pretence of Reformation) all sorts of fancies and doctrines indifferently. The most absurd dreames of the old *Chiliasts*, the most pernicious errours of *Origen*, the most infamous libertinisme of the *Anabaptists*,

and the most execrable impieties of the *Socinians*, doe usually take up the greatest part of their Sermons, the rest being designed either for inflaming the Auditours with the coales of sedition, and setting both parties at an irreconcileable distance; or else to embase all manners to the lowest degree of corruption. Yet in this generall depravation, God hath reserv'd for himselfe some well disposed persons, and indued them with courage to enquire into their actions, and to brand the crimes of the Age.

They have stoutly expres'd their dislike of what hath beene constantly delivered by many hundred Preachers in that Kingdome. I will not present you with an exact list of all they have publish-ed.

Judge with your selfe, if there be any impiety those men will make scruple of, many of whom (out of an extreame unheard of impudence) have had the boldnesse to defame in the open pulpit some of the other sex, whom they could not tempt to lewdnesse in their private Houses. I am very credibly informed that their names were presented to the Parliament, but could never heare of any punishment so much as intended them: this in my opinion was the more crying sinne, then that of the *Ghostly Father*, who seduced a woman in time of confession. There is in this an unparallel'd kind of scandall, and such as you will find farre to surpasse the greatest crimes which have ever beene charged upon any Hereticke in the World. Such disorders were not to be heard of till the Bishops were outed of their Jurisdiction, and all Church discipline robbed of it's force and vertue, notwithstanding the naturall irregularity of that People.

Three yeares Anarchy and Independance in the Church have plunged that State into more confusion then all the Civill Warre, the ease, prosperity, and long enjoyed plenty, the wildnesse and debauchednesse of many of their Princes in former times could doe. There be some, I know, that lay all the blame upon the negligence of the Prelates, accusing them of betraying that care wherewith they were entrusted for the good of the People; and are therefore urgent to have them made the first examples of Justice, as having filled the Churches with *a company of scandalous deboist fellowes*, instead of honest and faithfull Pastours. But were this true, the evill they complaine of would have shewed it selfe during their Authority,

rity, and while these monsters were in place, and not onely within these few yeares, as it hath done.

Nor would this shameless calumny deserve any other answer, were it not expedient to let the world know, that at the very moment the peace of the Church was molested, the Devill shooke off his chaines, and hath ever since without all controule disgorged his venime in the midst of it.

So long as there was a perfect harmony of affections betwixt the People and their Pastours, and an absolute conformity to those rules which were unanimously observed for the space of a whole age and upwards; such as had any seeds of a corrupt and depraved soule, were at least over-awed, and so not daring to appeare abroad, they were made uncapable of doing any mischeife. Those who are best acquainted with the Innovations of the times, and that make any conscience of a Lye, will all conclude with me, that the disorder which at this day hath overcast all *England* with an everlasting shame, owed it's beginning to none but such as have usurped the place of those ancient Divines and Pastours which they drive to their Cures. They are for the most part but a schismaticall and factious Crew, which the madnesse of a brutish and seditious People hath confusedly thrust up into the pulpit: Men of a farre different temper from those, who were in a peaceable and Legall way preferred to those places before: Such at *Lond.* were *Holdsworth*, *Hacket*, *Featley*, *Marsh*, *Shoote*, *Squire*, all men of abilities, and such as the *Puritans* themselves, before ever these troubles began, followed with admiration. These worthy persons who have by their learning and conversation so much advanced the Protestant cause, when to satisfy their Conscience and discharge the duty of their callings, they endeavoured to prevent the growing evils, and to choak the seeds of that fatall and deadly division among all the members of this Kingdome, were shamefully debarred of their Liberty, the exercise of their profession, and to compleate their miseries, having first made them spectatours of such ignorant, malicious and turbulent Firebrands as were preferred to their Benefices, and possest of their Houses, they thrust them into Dungeons, where they still continue loaded with chaines and irons, bemoaning their owne and their Countryes misery. The most of the *Cambridge* Doctors have well

nigh beene in as bad condition for refusing to take up armes against their Prince.

Above all Doctor *Ward*, who after he had beene Professour of Divinity in that famous Universitty for the space of thirty yeares, reputed generally for one of the most pious and knowing men of his time, and who had with much vehemence opposed *Popery* and *Arminianisme*, and all other Innovations of our age, hath suffered divers torments by their cruelty, who endeavoured to extort his approbation of that tyranny which they exercised upon the Soules of all those they sought to engage in their faction. In fine, he died, having beene kept in bonds as a vile Malefactour: His last words acquaint us sufficiently with the nature of his crime.—*I will never* (said he, giving up the Ghost) *be a Rebell to my King, nor will I ever contribute to that outrage which is done to my Prince.* These be the *deboist fellowes* the Bishops set up; these be the *Monsters* whom they chase out of their Pulpits, and banish the Churches. The Saints which the Parliament, or rather a franticke people, have put in their roomes, are such as I have formerly describ'd you, who preach nothing but injuries, and denounce nothing but cursings; and yet, for all this, talke of agreement with us in *France*.

Certainly it highly concernes us to entertaine no manner of commerce or allyance with them.

I speake onely of the outward conformity; as for that within, what fellowship and unity of spirit can there be betwixt us and those that are enemies to all Order, and harbour so many impurities amongst them? These are they of which your Synods must henceforth consist, (if the *Independents* doe not quite suppresse them) and who must prescribe Rules to Christendome. These be they who must mould the Discipline and dispose of the Government of the Church. Judge now with what wisedome and holinesse it is like to be governed. Let them ordaine or execute what they please, the Magistrates must be no better then Lookers on; in as much as the Clergy and themselves are two distinct bodies, which must needs draw along with it such consequences as are most pernicious both to Church and State; For by this meanes a doore is opened not onely to sedition, tumults, and civill warres, but even to all excesse of riot and licentiousnesse, to which that Nation is naturally devoted. There

would be leſſe cauſe to feare any ſuch diſorder, might the Biſhops be ſtill continued, and enjoy their Priviledge of ſitting in Parliament. The People would entertaine better correſpondence one with another, and Peace would ſooner flouriſh amongſt them.

The Prelates (like faithfull Paſtours) preaching innocency as well by their practiſe as their doctrine, and as members of a Convention repreſenting the whole State, would by their authority nouriſh good agreement and perfect harmony in all the inferiour Clergy. This your Bouteſeus and oppoſers of Epiſcopacy perceive well enough; and therefore would have no Rulers at all, neither Biſhop, nor Magiſtrate. In which reſpect they are farre worſe then the Miniſters of that Tyrant of the Church, who in ſhaking off, as much as in them lieth, all obedience to ſecular Princes, acknowledge a multiplicity of Heads amongſt themſelves, and by the ſeverall aſcents and power of ſuperiority, which they call *Hierarchy*, (and which they have prudently eſtabliſhed for prevention of diſcords and confuſion) they arrive at laſt at one, to whom all indifferently are bound to ſubmit, as to their ſpirituall Monarch.

They bragge withall of an intended conformity to *Geneva*; But let me tell them, before they can doe this, they muſt abjure that *Independence* which they are ſo hot in purſuit of; and in ſtead of being Maſters and Lords Paramount in their Conſiſtories, they muſt ſubmit to their juſt Authority, whom God hath in every State deputed to repreſent his Authority, to wit, Princes, and their Vicegerents: For ſo it is in *Geneva*, where in the place they iſſue forth their ſpirituall cenſures, one of the *cheife Senatours* is alwaies appointed to paſſe ſentence upon offenders, without the concurrence of any one beſides, which denotes the ſubordination of the Conſiſtory, and it's ſubjection to the Magiſtrate. I inſtance not in this Cuſtome, as if I thought it worthy the imitation: no, it hath it's blemiſhes as well as thoſe in other places, and is perhaps as repugnant to the ancient practice of the Church. That which I moſt diſlike in it (as a matter of dangerous conſequence) is, that in ſtead of the uſuall Diſcipline among the Faithfull in winning the Soule from vice by ſweet alluring meanes (after the example of God, who drawes us *with the cords of love*) they exerciſe a temporall Juriſdiction, and practice the ſeverity of Judges meerly ſecular; which begets two evils at once; the firſt, an intrenching upon the Churches function,

in depriving her of the liberty of censuring crimes: The second is, that by the rigour of that Custome Offenders are many times driven to such desperate resolutions, that they chuse rather to flee the City, then to abide the hazard of a triall; whence commonly ariseth a third; namely, that by the intercession of Parents or Freinds, they are permitted to compound with their purses, and so that repose and security which should be found onely in the goodnesse of men (such especially as would be accounted *Saints*) is often to be had in the corruption and venality of the Judges: the ready way to impenitency and hardnesse of heart.

Can they now after all this object against the Bishops of *England*, that either avarice or corruption hath prevailed with them to connive at the vicious, or that they used too much rigour and precipitation in the execution of their authority? If so be they have any designe to make *Geneva* their patterne, For my part I finde nothing commendable in their Discipline, but this; that our first Reformers have hereby given the world sufficient proofe of their absolute aversion from infringing the force of Lawes, or undermining the Authority of the Magistrates; And that they never dreamt of being endowed with a power (so directly opposite to all secular authority) which might any way disoblige them from obedience due to Princes.

The custome they have in their *monethly Assemblies* is yet more for our purpose. For besides that they never conveene without the consent of their Senatours, either expres'd or implyed, (no more then our assemblyes doe in *France*) the severall results and acts of those meetings are altogether invalid, till the same Powers have approved and ratified them; which is yet more remarkeable, in as much as there they confine themselves to the cognition of such causes alone, as reflect either upon manners, or Religion.

The *Palatinate* went beyond *Geneva* in this particular, where in the Ecclesiasticall Assembly at *Heidelberg*, the Prince had alwaies his Officers, or *Overseers*, as I may truly call them: Nor was there ever any Synod held within the verge of his Dominions, where there was not a *President* deputed by Him; and besides what ever was agreed upon, nothing could be put in execution, till it had passed the examination of his Counsell, and received his owne approbation. A custome very conformable to the practice of all ages since

the infancy of the Church, whensoever any Councells at all were held, or where there was any Prince, or such as either might or would challenge any interest in them.

Would our Reformers here walke in the same Track, they would abate of that insolence, whereby they maintaine, that *the power they exercise is no other then the power of Heaven, nor would* they any longer call their *Conventicles* the *Tribunall*, and their *Censures* the *Decrees* of Christ. They would talke no more of a right of conveening in despight of their Magistrates, or Princes: and when they were conveened by their authority, they would attend their approbation, as necessary to the execution of what they had determined. And in case they were at first denyed it, they would not straight picke a quarrell, and excommunicate them, much lesse would they dare to depose them for any opposition whatsoever. They would confine themselves simply to a power over the conscience, without encroaching upon the civill Magistrate, and under a pretence of advanceing piety towards God, and charity towards their neighbour, would no longer abuse such weake silly people, as suffer themselves to be inveigled by the persons they susteine as Ministers of the Gospell.

But we may lawfully conclude, they thinke of nothing lesse; they have a quarrell with the temporall lawes, and downe they must sooner or later, if this torrent be not maturely opposed. They will destroy all Legall Parliaments and overturne all secular authority.

This is the mischeife which all the sound Members of the present Parliament should eagerly struggle with, and not consent so slavishly (as their manner hath beene) to such things as threaten the whole with inevitable ruine.

All the care they take and the paines they bestow here to reestablish, as they pretend, the freedome of their Votes, the Liberty of the Subject, and the purity of Religion, are indeed but so many attempts to involve themselves, with all the ancient rights of Church and State in the same common destruction; the Capitall Enemies thereof insensibly gathering ground, and notwithstanding all their faire pretences, making their party so strong, that when the Parliament shall have fancyed themselves at the very top of their designe, (thinking now they have pluck'd up all Tyranny and superstition by the rootes,) they will finde in the issue, that they have

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intangled the State in so much confusion as all the wit of man will never be able to compose. There is no Law here, but Arbitrary. What house is secure? What person free? What wise man regarded? What honest man imitated? What vice punished? What virtue rewarded? What stranger priviledg'd? What Minister of State unviolated, contrary to the Law of Nations? All professions, degrees and qualities, are hudled up together in the common confusion. The People which used to receive Lawes, in this generall hurliburly prescribes them, ignorant, malicious, and giddy headed rabble that it is; it must be shaping a monster which the whole world cryes out of; nay, 'tis allready formed. The *London* rout being now the sole Moderatours to all the Rebellious part of the Kingdome. They have ruin'd the Nobility, despoiling them partly of their meanes, and partly of their power. Such of the Peeres as continue still amongst them, are neither of any account, nor Authority. You shall have three or foure seditious rascalls of the City, who are of no extraction, no merit, no name, (but what they have purchased in traduceing honest men, in murthering the innocent, and turning each place that lies within the reach of their fury into a disconsolate Wilderness) more listened to, and draw more abettours after them, then all the House of Lords can do. So that me thinkes I heare some interpose and say, certainely this convention you tell us of, hath nothing but a counterfeit name; and is no more then the shadow and empty picture of a true Parliament: things are carryed there with so much precipitation and violence, that for any man but to talke of moderation, and to indeavour the recalling of some humanity into the mindes of men, is the ready way to be accounted a *Malignant*: and they that have attempted any such matter have beene used accordingly: Witnesse the many Members of Parliament, who being returned thither upon a free Election, according to the Lawes of the Land, have nevertheless beene chased thence, some by the bare Votes of such as complyed with the popular madnesse, and others by some out-rage or injury done to their persons. And how many of these have for their honesty and integrity sate in six or seven Parliaments with a generall applause? What kinde of People now have they substituted in their places? Even such as the lawes of the Realme did ever exclude thence, as the knowen instruments of malice and fury.

They

They have not indeed quite ſuppreſſed the Houſe of Peeres, but they have notoriouſly vilified it, in ſo much as they will no longer allow them a ſhare in the publique conſultations. No ſhare I ſay, there being but two or three of the Lords left to their liberty, and that for no other reaſon, but becauſe they combine with the faction. The reſt are forced to ſwimme with the ſtreame, and they have not ſpirit enough to contradict the major part in any thing, though their Conſcience prompt them never ſo much unto it.

Things could ne'r have come to this paſſe, had not the Biſhops beene outed, and therefore (as I informed you before) they begun at them; a peice of the moſt notorious violence and injuſtice that ever was heard of, condemned by all the honeſt men I know, that are acquainted with the Principles of Chriſtianity, and the Lawes of a well-grounded Policy, agreeable to both which they were firſt ſeated in Parliament, and ought to have beene continued there, as the only Pillars to ſupport Order and Uniformity, and conſequently to hinder the State from falling to peices, eſpecially to prevent the downefall of Monarchy, all other formes of government being here ſo utterly repugnant to it. But I ground not only upon thoſe advantages which Monarchy enjoyes in their conſervation to worke your diſlike of thoſe that outed them, nor upon the ſole intereſts of the whole Church, which was ſo much concerned to keepe them in their places. I ſtand altogether for their perſonall rights, which are as ancient as thoſe of the State, the Biſhops having as ſtrong a title to a place in Parliament, as either the Lords, or Commons. For if with the reſt of the Clergy they make a part of the State (as undenyably they do) who can queſtion their ſhare in the rights of the State? So that to exclude them is to ſet up one diſtinct State in the midſt of another, which is all one as to diſmember and divide the ſame State from it ſelfe, and by conſequent to engage it to its owne inevitable deſtruction. Beſides, as the Nobility and the Clergy (though both concurring) cannot without violation of the Publique Right exclude the Commons from publike conventions where Lawes are to be made for all, ſo neither can the Nobility and Commons (though both agreeing) debarre the Clergy, no more then the Clergy and the Commons can exclude the Nobility.

The caſe being thus, who ſees not, that in the expulſion of Biſhops

ſhops all the rights of the State are infringed, & that this is the act of an unruly multitude: which (being empoyſoned with a ſpirit of Libertiniſme) did at the firſt extort the approbation of thoſe Lords that ſtayed amongſt them, and then rewarded their Cowardice with the loſſe of their Power, and reducing them unto ſuch a low contemptible condition, that they could ſcarce be more vilified were they quite expelled the Houſe.

Weigh a little (I beſeech you) with what pretences they maske this outrage. They will needes perſwade us, that *Holy orders are inconſiſtent with ſecular employments*, and that *it is a thing below the Miniſters of the Goſpell to intermeddle in civill Affaires*. To which purpoſe they quote us ſeverall paſſages of Scripture, and urge withall the example of a certaine *Church man*, whom *Cyprian* would not allow any commemoration, becauſe he had taken upon him to be Guardian to a ward. But this rigour which they preſſe ſo hotly upon the Clergy is neither conſequent, nor character of true Sanctity. 'Tis indeed the iſſue of an Anabaptiſticall braine. *Henderſon* and *Marſhall* (two of their moſt able and expert Divines) proclaime to the world by their ſecular employments in *England* and *Scotland*, that they make but a mocke of theſe Arguments, and that they beleeve thoſe of their profeſſion may without wounding their conſcience, or tranſgreſſing the rules of Chriſtianity embrace all opportunities to promote the good of the Church, though it be in the conduct of temporall affaires. They have their generall Commiſſions, as if they had never entered upon holy Orders, by which they are enabled to heare and determine any matter of State, even to the advanceing of a warre.

But granting theſe men the inconſiſtence they dreame of, would not you concurre with me in this, that though the Biſhops Votes in Parliament be not ſimply neceſſary as a part of the civill government, yet they ought to be granted them as the undenyable conſequent of that univerſall priviledge which all free-borne Subjects enjoy, which is, not to be bound by any Law they never aſſented to, either in their owne perſons, or by their proxies.

Beſides it was ever till now thought but reaſon and equity, that to ſuch conventions where both ſpirituall and temporall affaires are to be joyntly agitated, there ſhould be ſummoned not onely your ſecular Statesmen to judge of the utility, or (as they phraſe it here)

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the convenience of Lawes, nor such onely as are skilfull in that profession to give verdict of their legality, but withall some wise and honest Divines, to judge for matter of piety in enacting them. The truth is, these cavillers bewray both in their speeches and in all their proceedings an absolute incapacity of any sound judgement, blindly hurried on to an alteration of government, out of a fond conceite, that their designe will succeed so fortunately as to leade the dance for all the people in *Europe* to follow, to which they sollicite them in their Covenant. But they have more wit, I trow, then to be their Apes. They have better rules to follow of their owne; especially we Protestants of *France*,* with whose interests those Gentlemen were very little affected, when they used the Papists with so much inhumanity, so as it seems they would not acknowledge us for their brethren, or that their charity was very cold towards us.

* When they of *London* were told, that the rigorous courses they tooke against the Papists here, would sooner or later be practiced upon the Protestants in *France*: their answer was, Let others looke to themselves and let us alone for looking to our selves.

We have learned both from Christ and his Apostles, the Doctors of the Church, and all our first Reformers, that such as be Incendiaries either of the Church or State have no portion amongst the faithfull, nor the Saints of God; and for this very reason I cannot be perswaded they have any favourers or Abettours amongst us, or that any to whom God hath given the least graine of understanding or honesty, will not condemne their designe, and all their proceedings, and having once advised them to quit such courses, will not utterly detest them if they persevere.

You will say now, that though they have put downe *Episcopacy*, and undermined the power of the *Nobility*, yet they are not any way disaffected to *Royalty*. Can any man beleive this after so many thousand seditious Propositions, which they daily publish both in Presse and Pulpit? peruse them, I beseech you, for my sake, though I know you cannot doe it without horrour, and ever and anon turning your eyes from them; so full of venime are they against all the Princes in the world; so contrary to the doctrine and practice of Christians, and so injurious to the name and profession of all true and sincere Protestants, such are these; *Though the King be greater then any one of his Subjects in particular, yet he is farre lesse then the body collective of all his Subjects: The King is for the people, and not the people for the King; and by consequent, the people are of more worth and value then he, in as much as the meanes are alwaies subordinate to that end to which they are directed, and from whence*

they derive their worth: The power and authority of any usurping Tyrant is as much from God, as that of lawfull Kings: The Power of Princes (those especially which by inheritance are such) flowes from the people, and consequently is more deeply rooted and eminently seated in them, then it is in the Person of the Prince; because, Quod efficit tale est magis tale. (I am forced to make use of their owne barbarous tearmes, that I may the better expresse the barbarousnesse of their conceptions.) *As Kings receive their power from the people, so they may be divested of it by them, either in the body collective of all, or in the body representative in Parliament, or by the major part of either. In case the King shall falsifie the Oath he takes at his Coronation, the people are thereupon discharged, and freed from their alleagiance to him*; Positions so much the more absurd, because the Lawes of that Land have provided to the contrary, and that all the world have acknowledged it as a maxime, that *the King of England never dyes*; that without all distinction of time, as well before as after his Coronation, he receives all such homages and services, as are due to the Crowne; that he is not King upon condition, as if by violation thereof, he should fall from his Right to the Kingdome, but upon bare promises, the non performance of which is enough to denominate him unjust, but not to depose him. They proceed, *No sonne may with more equity binde the hand of his distracted father, no marriner more justly remove a Pilot from the Sterne, who would wracke the ship (either out of ignorance, or malice) then Subjects may by force of armes dethrone their Prince, if he shall once apparently hearken to any counsels pernicious to the State, and that the Commonwealth either by his weakenesse, or negligence, be in danger of ruine. Saint* Paul *doth not command, but barely exhort every soule to be subject to the higher powers. This was but a prudentiall counsell of one that was to rule a People at such a time as they had neither strength nor meanes to doe otherwise, and that to thinke the contrary were to put such a yoake upon the conscience, as he never dreamed of; By the higher powers Saint* Paul *speakes of, we are not to understand the Person of a King, but his charge and office, as it is represented in his Courts, and in the Parliament*; insomuch that the Subjects of *England*, according to this doctrine, may beare armes against CHARLES STEVVART, residing at *Oxford*, and yet still observe that alleagiance which is due to the King in his Parliament at *London*.

Lond. Which is as much of a true body to make an idle phantasme, of a King a *Chimera*, as some have done of Christ himselfe, transubstantiating him from a true man to an imaginary, senseleſſe, and absurd I know not what. The Authors of theſe pernicious opinions might learne a little more wiſedome, were they but capable of weighing (as they ought) the rules of that State; which informe us that every treaſon reſpects either mediately or immediately the perſon of the King. There can none of them be ignorant, how that before theſe fatall diſtractions, all the Judges were of opinion, and have ſo determined the caſe, that the Subjects of *England* are clearely and abſolutely bound to obey their Prince even in his *naturall capacity*, that is, the perſon of CHARLES STEVVART, and not onely in his *politique capacity*, as he is I know not what imaginary and Platonicke King. Beſides they need not be informed how this very doctrine which the Parliamenteers at this day publiſh to the world, and upon which they ground all their ſeverall acts of violence, is both in the *Magna Charta*, and thoſe acts concerning the baniſhment of *Hugh Spencer*, condemned in full Parliament, and rejected as a principle of Treaſon, fraud, and Rebellion. They proceed yet further, and tell us, That *the Parliament may in caſe of neceſſity ordaine lawes for peace and warre in ſpight of the Prince, which ſhall equally oblige every member of the State; And in caſe the King refuſe to confirme them, the ſame Parliament is to be the ſole arbitratour and judge of that neceſſity; and of the time how long it ought or can continue; That the King is bound to ratifie all preſented to him by the Parliament, notwithſtanding all the objections which either his Counſell or his owne reaſon and Conſcience ſhall ſuggeſt unto Him. That the Civill Government ought alwaies to give place to the Eccleſiaſticall.* Were it ſo, that the government of the Church here were partly Democraticall, as the *Browniſts* would have it, or partly Ariſtocraticall, and partly Democraticall, as it is amongſt the *Preſbyterians*, it is eaſy to inferre, what would become of the Civil Magiſtrate.

Theſe are the holy maximes and pious Doctrines of thoſe that pretend to purity of life, and talke of reſtoring the Lawes and Ordinances framed by our firſt Reformers to that vigour and Authority, which the Tyrants of the Conſcience, and enemies of all ſecular power have wreſted from them. I am ſure neither *Chriſt*, nor *Moſes*,

nor *Paul*, nor *Peter*, taught them any such lesson, but *Mariana*, *Bellarmine*, *Bourchier*, *Brutus*, *Buchanan*, and the rest of those Hellish firebrands employed by the Devill to disturbe that Order, which the Eternall providence of Heaven had set up in the World.

Let me hereunto adde that notable demonstration of their Affection towards their Queene. They have expressely prohibited all prayers both publique and private for Her Conversion. A horrible thing that they should plot the destruction of Her soule, and endeavour to extend the fruits of their Rebellion against Her in another world. Will you not say it had beene enough to persecute Her in this? but I have not yet told you all. They have also basely and insolently stained Her Reputation, and, in a way which all honest men will account no better then *parricide*, attempted to murther *a Princesse, a Daughter of France*, to whom the winds and the sea had shewed more pitty but an houre before.

The expresse words of the Covenant.

And yet forsooth they must needs have all the Reformed Churches to make them their Precedent: inviting us, whom they ranke among such *as groane under the yoake of Anti Christian Tyranny, to joine with them in the same or like Association and Covenant*, and to use our utmost endeavours for the recovery of Peace and quiet in every part of Christendome. What is this but to sollicite us to shake off the yoake of Soveraignty? to deny all subjection to our Princes, and at once to destroy both their Authority and their Persons? For all which they pretend the *Advancement of the Kingdome of Christ*.

'Tis indeed mightily advanced since these men, who call themselves his Disciples, have subverted all secular Authority amongst them, scattering abroad such positions as ought to render them odious to us, in as much as they convince them before all the Powers of God's establishing to be sowers of sedition, Libertinisme, and Rebellion.

But granting them that all this combustion they make in the world is to advance the Kingdome of Christ; Have they any warrant from the example of the Primitive Christians to pursue that end by such meanes? no, it was never in their thoughts to arme themselves so much as against those Pagan Monsters, whose calmest demeanour towards them farre surpassed in rigour and cruelty all the

outrage

outrage and persecution which we can be imagined to have suffered from any of our Princes, for above five hundred yeares together. Saint *Peter* was reprov'd for presuming to defend his Master with the sword. This example I'me sure is authentique; nor is that of the Christians under the Emperour *Julian* much inferiour to it. Their number was great, and their power formidable, but their Religion restrained them from employing it against their Prince, though in their owne defence. Please you to call to minde the *Theban Legion*.

Doubtlesse they had all heard and weighed that injunction of our Saviour; *But I say unto you, that ye resist not evill.* They had learned also, that *the Powers are ordained of God, and that whosoever resisteth the Power resisteth the ordinance of God.* Not as if that prohibition to resist Princes implyed a Command of obeying them against Conscience. All that can be deduced thence is this: That in case they shall persecute their Subjects out of any considerations whatsoever, whether sacred or civill, it were better to endure a thousand deaths then to lift up a hand against them.

The crime of these men will appeare farre more horrid, if notice be taken, that the King against whom the combination is made, did never attempt the least innovation either in Religion, or Liberty. I speake onely of *England*.

As for *Scotland*, I am not ignoranr what hath passed there, of which I intend to give you a particular relation.

They cannot produce any innovation here, Indeed the [a] *Arch-Bishop of Canterbury* was shrewdly suspected to have beene contriving some. That weake, ill-temperd, and fondly ambitious soule, would perhaps have presumed to be tampering, had he continued longer in place, which is therefore now the principall charge against him.

But as for the King, what signall demonstrations hath he not ever given the world of an extreame aversion from Popery? How many Protestations hath he made of sticking close to the Protestant Religion? How carefull is he to performe all those duties to which the Faith he professeth obligeth him? He hath filled the Churches and Sees with men whose piety, knowledge, and conversation, are patternes worthy the imitation of the most Orthodox Christians.

[a] It is to be presumed, that the Author, being a stranger, was too faire transported with the vulgar outcryes against this worthy Prelate: whose many pious actions, & the sincerity of whose intentions had he truly known, he would readily have given another character of him. And when he shall understand and consider his constant perseverance to Death in the same resolutions of zeale for the true Protestant Religion, and exemplary loyalty to his King, (for which he became a willing sacrifice) no doubt but he will be as ready to retract this rash censure, as we to admonish.

His

His house hath ever abounded with men of Learning and Honesty? Besides, what would it advantage him to reestablish Popery? Is he weary of being a free Monarch? Would he do homage againe to *Rome*, and acknowledge a Soveraignty above his owne? The Interests of his Crowne as well as those of his Conscience would not suffer him to entertaine such a thought. But this is not all, he would have cause to feare a farre greater mischeife from *Scotland*, which all the advantages he could hope for from all the Papists in the world would never be able to counterpoise. He must further shake off them of the *Palatinate*, and in doing that, forfeit all his reputation in *Germany*; He must breake with *Denmarke*; Nay he must not entertaine any commerce, either with his neareſt allyes, *or his deareſt freinds*.

The marrying of his Daughter to the Prince of *Orange's* Sonne, is a pregnant evidence of his affection to the Protestant Religion. But to make good their Calumny, they accuse him of favouring Papists; and yet who knowes not, that the exchequer was never fuller with their composition-money, then now? In the Reignes of King *Edward*, Queene *Elizabeth*, and King *James*, they were not used with halfe the rigour. When this King shewed them most favour it came short of what they have done. But I pray, by what principle of Christianity are we bound to destroy such as are of a different Religion? There is no forceing of any man's beleife, none that can subdue the Liberty of the soule, God onely excepted. Our French Kings are well instructed in this point, they might with a like equity destroy or banish us, as here they do Papists, did they not know that the conscience neither can nor ought to be forced. Most true it is, that the Protestants in *France*, never attempted any thing upon the persons of their Princes, what violence soever hath beene practic'd upon them by such as abused their Authority; on the contrary for all their sufferings they have made it legible to the world, that they would rather part with all the bloud in their veines in their defence, then hazard the least drop to be revenged of them, even then when some strange counsells had prevailed with them to signe their destruction. A very pressing consideration wherewith to refute all pretended Interests of Religion, and to procure them a toleration, notwithstanding the differences of opinions. The Papists case in *England* is much unlike theirs, in as much as they are ever and anon

plotting the destruction of their Prince; a crime I am so farre from excusing, that I detest it as one of the most execrable which the veriest rake-hell in the world can be guilty of. But withall let me adde, that it had never beene so much in use, had those, who could not conforme to the Reformation, beene dealt with more favourarably. The Law here is unjust onely in condemning their persons to death, as such, but just in proceeding against their treasonable machinations. Let it in God's name have its full course upon them as they are Traitours, but not barely as mis-beleevers. God gave to his Apostles no Commission to propagate the Gospell of his sonne by force of Armes; much lesse to our States and Kingdomes now: would but Christians lay this seriously to heart, they would never make use of any but the *Armes of the spirit* against those that are reprobate to the truth; and so there would be some difference made betwixt Papists that are onely offenders against God, and such as are so both against God and the Princes which he hath set over them. How many of them beare as much respect to their Soveraignes as we can possibly do to ours, and are as zealous for the good of Kingdomes and the Peace of People? Others indeed there be that have sucked the same venime with these new emissaries of Hell, who take this for a *Maxime*: *That Kings are no longer Kings, but reall Tyrants, when they cease to be Catholiques; and that it is a meritorious Act to embrew their hands in their bloud, and to free the People from their dominion over them.* Let the Law be executed against such without mercy, nor let any Princes or States give the least toleration to such abhominable Incendiaries. But as for the rest, let the unblameable conversation and integrity of those that are in authority over them, preach a Reformation to them, untill their houre be come, and grace from Heaven be shed amongst them. If the Religion they professe be not of it selfe destructive, and that in all other considerations they submit to the Lawes and maintaine the Interests of the State in which they live, all the power which can be challenged over them, is but to restraine them within the publique rules: it being an act of the greatest injustice, to deprive them either of their lives or estates, for no other reason but because they are incapable of the knowledge and piety of another person. This was one of the wormes that gnawed upon the conscience of *Philip* the second, that he had attempted by force of Armes to propagate Christianity

in the new world, where the Devill was their only deity. And how heavy should this example lye upon the Consciences of all such Princes and Magistrates as exercise the same cruelties upon their Subjects, or on those that differ not in the foundation from them, worshipping the same Christ, acknowledging him to be what he is, and all expecting salvation by him?

But if such pressing motives cannot worke upon *England*, let them at least consider what must necessarily befall to many thousand honest Protestants that live under the dominion of Popish Princes, who certainely will revenge upon them all the outrage done the Papists under Protestant Princes. And the number of the former is farre greater, then the number of these; so that for one Preist who out of a fond distemper'd zeale shall be put to death here, there will be in other places fifty Protestant Ministers in danger to perish. Besides this, *France* at the first led the way in abstaining from all cruelty towards those of the Reformation there; but was afterwards implacably mad against them neare upon the time that those rigorous Lawes were enacted against *Recusants* in this Kingdome. And if in *France* such courses were thought fit to be utterly abandoned, why should they be continued in *England*?

If none of these considerations will move them, let them forbeare at least out of charity to us. And to this purpose they may recall into their memories what *Justin* and *Theodorick* did in the case of the *Catholiques* and the *Arians*. The former vehemently persecuted the *Arians* in all quarters of his Dominions, and the later did as much to the *Catholiques* in the West, where he commanded. But both at last were content to superseде from bloudshed, and by the advise of their Doctours, in the yeare 525 (If I mistake not) allowed them ease and liberty of Conscience, whom they could not master by torments and violence. *John* Bishop of *Rome* was one that interposed in the businesse, and the first who perswaded the Orthodox Prince to more mildnesse, and to quit all thoughts of rigour and courses of cruelty. The Christians of those times judged aright, that violence did not suit with the Gospell, and that steele was no fit instrument to make impression upon obdurate hearts. And though their Princes would sometimes arme them against *Pagans* or *Sectaries*, it was meerely for the interests and safety of their Crownes; as in particular, that *Justine*, I named you, when he saw the Empire ready to

fall

fall in peices, and that the most warlike nations (who had subdued the rest) were fallen off to such Princes, as indeed bore the name of Christians, but were by reason of their Heretical opinions divided from them, had great reason to be afraid that many of his owne Subjects agreeing with them in the same Principles, would follow their example. It concerned him not to destroy them, and to harbour them neare himselfe was to nourish to many vipers in his owne bosome. Yet in as much as he was the occasion that many *Orthodox* Christians lost their lives, and because he had no jurisdiction over the Consciences of those that were not such, he relinquished all former courses of violence and persecution. 'Twere well, if this example could worke the Kings of *England* and all other Princes in the world to the like moderation. Do not even the *Turk* and the *Persian* tolerate us in their Dominions? Shall humanity be found in *Barbarians*, and not in Christian and civilized Princes? What? doth the Reformation oblige us to be cruell? I cannot thinke it, no more then that any Protestant in *France* (who hath not renounc'd his reason) will not subscribe with me to the same opinion.

I speake not this to disswade from the use of such meanes as are necessary for abolishing of Superstition, and reestablishing the purity of Christian Religion. There be other courses enough besides violence to reduce stragglers into the way. And if there were not, should they finde a toleration, might they not be prevented from seducing others? If there be any just cause to feare the consequents of the *Maximes* and Doctrines they maintaine, it concernes the Magistrate prudently to provide a remedy, and to stop them from proceeding further; but above all to take care that their Preists scatter not any rebellious Doctrine, a thing very familiar with such as have had their breeding at *Rome*, in *Spaine*, or in any Schooles of the *Jesuites*. Had they their education at home, they would breath nothing but affection to the place of their nativity; and the liberty which would be indulged them among their Parents and kindred (without the least jealousie of suffering for any differences in opinions) would nourish respect in them towards their King and all other their Superiours; whereas rigour doth but harden them the more, and imbolden them to redeeme themselves at any rate from that irkesome necessity (which is commonly imposed on them) to be-

leeve otherwiſe then they will, and perhaps too then they can.

Let me but adde a word of the *Liberties* they talke of, and for which they make ſo much noyſe in the world. I am not altogether ignorant what they be, as having ſeene a great part of the Lawes and Cuſtomes of that Kingdome. Certainely thoſe gentlemen may with much credit charge their King with the violation of them, who have themſelves ſo inſolently trampled upon whatſoever hath the face either of Publique or private right. I ſhall attend an opportunity to give you a diſtinct information of their baſeneſſe in this particular. For the preſent I ſhall onely aſſure you thus much in generall; that their complaints are moſt groundleſſe, as flowing from the ſame ſpirit by whoſe inſtigation they have ſlandered the religion and piety of their Prince. Did he ever during that peaceable part of his reigne over them, endeavour to ſtretch his prerogative, or to protect any of his Creatures, that encroached, I will not ſay upon the Lawes of the Realme, but even upon the propriety of the meaneſt Subject? Was there ever in any Kings Reigne knowne fewer eſcheats, except thoſe from Recuſants? or fewer proſcriptions and baniſhments? fewer executions? leſſe diſorder and violence? leſſe repining? fewer impoſitions? in a word, fewer Innovations? And therefore it concerned them to fancy (as they have done) a thouſand illegall and tyrannicall actions in that Prince, that ſo they might more eaſily delude the People; and in the iſſue engage them (as in their owne defence) to a reſolution of making head againſt him, either wholly to deveſt him of all rule, or to reigne a while in his ſtead, or at leaſt to have a conſtant ſhare with him in the government. That blinde unruly *Beaſt* is never more ſervilely tame, then when abuſed with lyes, ever repining and ready to mutine at any extraordinary impoſition, though never ſo reaſonable and advantagious; You may lead it whither you pleaſe with a ſpecious pretence, ſo willing at this time to ſacrifice it ſelfe to the ambition of ſome factious ſpirits, intoxicated by their oaths and proteſtations, that they aime at nothing but the good of the People. In like manner have the Peſantry of *France* ſometimes inconſiderately engaged themſelves in the ſervice of a King of *Navarre*, a Duke of *Normandy*, and another of *Burgogne*, who having in effect no other deſigne then to advance their owne greatneſſe, would

 notwithſtanding

notwithstanding have nothing more in their mouthes then the publique liberty, of which (to speake truth) they were the most pernicious if not the onely enemies. Just so it is here now. They that have undertaken the protection of Priviledge, possessing their abettours and Disciples with the hopes of securing their liberties, thinke of nothing lesse then the interests of others; and that very thing which they pretend to appeare in the feild for, hath beene more violated and infringed by them, then ever it was by all the Kings of *England*.

And yet they have so varnisht over their actions, that by this trick they have got the estates, the lives, the hearts, nay and the consciences to boot of the People here, wholly into their owne disposall. It may be those unfortunate Wretches will be one day sensible of the Imposture, and perceive at last how they have approved and engaged themselves to what will be their destruction, if they repent not. For those that flatter them with the hopes of *liberty*, will either get the upper hand, and so make them their vassals, or else plunge them into a condition farre more intolerable, then the most irksome slavery: were it not for that Anabaptisticall venime, which hath intermixed it selfe with the naturall propension of this people to Libertinisme, there might be some hopes of remedy. But there have been the like disorders heretofore in this Kingdom. And a man would thinke that the soules of the Earle of *Leicester*, and the Duke of *Gloucester*, had by a kind of transmigration possessed the ring-leaders of this present Rebellion. But the former were so much the more excusable, in that they made not Religion the screene to their Ambition; which sooner put an end to those troubles.

That you may the better remember the cheife circumstances of that History, give me leave to acquaint you how in the reigne of King *Henry* the third there was a Parliament held at *Oxford*, which Posterity justly branded with an infamous name, calling it, *The mad Parliament*; (except me but the generall superstition of those times, and it will mervailously resemble that at *Westminster*) At which time the Lords and Commons forc'd that King to consent to the nominating of certaine persons amongst them, whom they stiled *Commissioners* and *Guardians of the Peace*. Whereupon under pretence of that extraordinary power, and by vertue not onely of an Ordinance of the two Houses, but of a compleate Act of Parliament, they rose up in Armes against their Prince, and molested him with a long and bloudy Warre, like this.

After

-d. After the various successe of which insolent attempt, and the severall innovations which distracted the Kingdome, the review of the whole businesse was committed to a free Parliament, in which the Authors and Promoters of that Warre were condemned of High Treason, and all the Rebels Estates by a solemne Act confiscate. But the extent of the crime abated of the punishment, lest otherwise the greatest part of *England* should have beene made a desolation. And certainly were there any hopes of a free Parliament now, the traiterous attempt of those who make up that shadow of a Parliament, would be proceeded against with all rigour, and the example of that at *Oxford* be renewed, seeing they have dared to renew the crime. And were the punishment proportion'd to the offence, these men should be used with more severity then the other, they have so farre out-done them. For their attempt was onely against their owne Prince, but the designe of these against all the Princes in the World. They were contented to be Rebels themselves, but these must have all the Protestants in Christendome to be so likewise. They medled not with Religion, nor thought to disquiet the Church; these have violated Religion, and torne the Church in peeces. They offered no violence to any of the three States in Parliament, suppressing onely the votes of some particular persons which crossed their designe. These have outed the whole Body of the Clergy, chased away divers of the Peeres, despoiled others of their Estates and Authority, sparing none but such as will be their Fellow-traitours. In breife, the former indeed advanc'd their Rebellion under a pretence of maintaining the publique Liberties but they expos'd not all the Kings that were to succeed to the madnesse and cruelty of the People, as these men doe.

I know you have often seene divers of their Positions, but I have reserv'd one to this place, which is worse then all the rest. They maintaine, That *Subjects may in pursuance of their Liberty take up Armes and employ all their strength against any that shall endeavour to reduce them to slavery. That there is no yoake of which they may not lawfully rid themselves, whosoever imposed it, whether some Conqueror, or their owne naturall Prince. That nature it selfe dictates unto the whole world the recovery of it's lost liberty, notwithstanding any former contracts, or any lawes to which they have sworne obedience, or even the expresse approbation of some preceding ages. That whosoever shall have*

power

power enough and not employ it to their end, men should be so farre from startling at their backwardnesse, that on the contrary they are to hold them for no other then Rebels against that nature, which commands them to dispense in this case with all former obligations whatsoever.

Sir, were not this ground enough for all the Magistrates in the Universe to arme against such *Pests* as these? You will now rest fully satisfied, that 'tis not Religion they fight for; and that by the conservation of those *Priviledges* they talke of, they intend nothing but the ruine and destruction of such as are in Authority over them. What else can we expect from such maximes? They who complaine so much of abusing Monarchy have infringed all the rights of it themselves. There was a Parliament in *Scotland* held in despight of the King, and the Acts of it are daily put in execution, contrary to his expresse commands, which is utterly to abolish all Regall Power, and to annihilate the Fundamentall Lawes of the State. This Parliament in *England* was indeed conveened by his Authority, but they bound his hands from dissolving it when he ought and would have done. No sooner were the Members met, but he was chased from *London*, and they upon this possesse themselves of the Houses, Forts, Castles, Ports, Navy and Ammunition of their Prince. They put the Earle of *Strafford* to Death upon pretences of their owne devising, that so they might have some colour for the designe against the person of their Soveraigne. They have forced his consent to an Act, which infringeth all the prerogatives of the Crowne. They will needs have the disposall and ordering of his family, murther his freinds and trusty Ministers, and so hinder all from being such. They will clip his Revenues as they please, not suffer him to dispose of vacant offices. They will not allow him any power in Church-affaires; bereave him of his Bishops, that so they may render him uncapable of discerning all factious contrivances under colour of Religion; and consequently of all meanes to prevent the execution of them. At this very present they are consulting how to deprive him of his Wardships, which you know is one of the faireſt *Flowers* of the Crowne of *England*, and the most proper character of Soveraignty.

I have almost spent my selfe in limning you the designes and practices of these men; but I hope you will not be weary in perusing and weighing them. I have besides many things of great conse-

quence

quence to tell you, which I reserve for some better opportunity, when I may have more leisure and liberty then is allowed me at this present.

In the interim let me earnestly request you to make what use you can of the truth of this Relation in behalfe of Reason and Justice.

In God's name employ your utmost endeavours to blast those false pretences of Zeale and Religion, that none of ours be carried away with them. I beleive it was to that end you desired this Letter from me, which I have dispatched towards you in persuance of your commands, and withall to satisfy my Conscience.

I will say nothing what is like to be the successe of our Ambassadour here. You may easily guesse by this Relation. The *Hollanders* have as weake hopes, as we: and I'me confident both of them desire to testify unto the world their love and inclination to Peace; although some accuse them of an averseneſſe from it, and that all their designes tend to the nourishing of this Warre. But certainly they desire to see an end of it, were it but for this reason, that the King of *England* might engage himselfe in the interests of *Germany*, and employ his strength there in behalfe of all the *oppressed Princes*, those especially which are more neare unto him. I will discourse with you more at large upon this, when I shall have the opportunity to give you an account of those other passages mentioned in your Letter.

In this and all things else you shall reade the constant desire I have to assure you, that I am unfeinedly.

Sir,

From *London*, *Jan.* 22. 1644.

Your most humble and most affectionate Servant.

FINIS.

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